JOHN BULL

Vol. II. No. 34. | SATURDAY, JAN. 26th. 1907. | ONE PENNY.

[Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.]

The world is a bundle of hay;
Mankind are the asses who pull;
Each tugs it a different way,
And the greatest of all is John Bull

—BYRON.

Edited by
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY, M.P.

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A Strange Book

The London Cuckoo Council.

Bull's Eyes.

Letter Bag. Racing Notes Etc.

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WITTY-CUR'S ALMANACK

Edited by the Very Reverend JIM CROW, V.S.O.P.

Bryce is off to America with it. The Speaker Speaks it.

Letter from Lord Rosebery.

"Lord Rosebery is much obliged to the Editor of Witty-Cur's Almanack for sending him a copy of the almanack." But does he remember his obligations?

Letter from the Prime Minister.

There is no letter from the Prime Minister or any other minister.

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Winning Post says:—"Very welcome. Brimful of fun from start to finish. A hearty laugh is assured to every reader."

The New Review say:—Virginal. Chaste. Miles a-head. Luminous. Bubbling spirits."

Punch says nothing.

The Sahara Express thinks "Jim Crow crude."

The Times (probably) finds it "stupid."

The Northern Weekly ((Bolton) says:—"Witty-Cur's Almanack is without doubt the most unreliable book we have ever consulted—as it is meant to be. Its editor is indeed a funny dog. Jim Crow is no respecter of places or persons, often irreverent, sometimes irrelevant, but always amusing."

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JOHN BULL.

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Without Fear or Favour—Rancour or Rant.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE.

The Offices of JOHN BULL *have now been removed to* 4, RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET, LONDON, *where, in future,* ALL COMMUNICATIONS *must be addressed, except in regard to advertisements (see notice below).*

Letters must be addressed to the Editor, or the Publisher, according to whether they relate to Editorial or business matters.

All editorial inquiries MUST BE MADE BY LETTER.

All matter appearing in JOHN BULL, *unless otherwise signed, is editorial.*

TO ADVERTISERS.

Arrangements have been made with Messrs. Greenberg & Co., Ltd., of 80, Chancery Lane, London, W.C., who will in future conduct all advertising business connected with this journal, and to whom advertisers desiring spaces must apply for particulars.

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6, Paul-st., Finsbury, E.C. M. GREGORY, Managing Director.

THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL.

[The Editor discourses upon passing events and topics of the day.]

Once again we are assured that Mr. Chamberlain's health is "progressing satisfactorily," and that he "hopes very soon to resume his public duties." We shall be interested to see whether he is in his place on the re-assembling of Parliament on the 12th February next, and if not, we may possibly move for a new writ for West Birmingham, on the ground that he is absenting himself from the House without leave; for, of course, if it be true that he is now able to write political manifestoes and letters to public meetings, there will be no excuse for his absence three weeks' hence. No one would be more delighted than ourselves to welcome him—*but he will not be there.*

The Rev. Mr. Aked is already beginning to receive his "punishment." At any rate, that is the way he puts it. He is evidently, therefore, satisfied that he has been doing something wrong. What he now complains of is that he is inundated with begging applications, which he is requested to pass on to his new master, Mr. Rockefeller. He concludes a protest against this bombardment by the question whether people think he is a fool. *Prima facie*, we think the evidences all point in the opposite direction. A definite statement, however, of the respective salaries at Liverpool and New York would set the point at rest.

Up in Scotland is a godly parish minister, in the person of the Rev. Mr. Charlton, who saves souls at Stranraer. Being a "fisher amongst men," he keeps a keen eye on his secular rivals, and when the other day the local crews arrived with an exceptionally good haul of herrings, they were startled to receive the following communication:—

> "Dear Sir,—As parish minister of Stranraer, I have a legal claim to one-tenth of all the herrings landed at Stranraer. I write you to say I will accept the sum of £3 instead of £10 for every £100 worth you got this season. If you are not satisfied with the legality of my claim, I will satisfy any lawyer you select that it is my right. In consequence of the stormy weather I make this reduction.—Sincerely yours, H. P. Charlton, parish minister, Stranraer."

We are not in a position to express an opinion as to the strict legality of the rev. gentleman's claim. We are disposed, however, to think that, like many other old-time privileges, it has become obsolete. We were ourselves for many years Lord of an ancient Manor, one of the privileges of which was what the lawyers know as "the right of murchita." We cannot very well in a public journal enlarge upon the exact significance of the phrase, and must content ourselves by observing that its strict enforcement in days gone by led to the abolition of primogeniture in the counties in which it prevailed. If the Rev. Mr. Charlton is right in his present contention, we shall never cease to regret that we parted with those manorial rights!

The *Daily News* welcomes "with great pleasure" the contents of the new Betting Act, and states that it has "always maintained that the root of the betting evil is in the Press," and that it would like to make "advertisements in connection with betting agencies, tipsters' business, or lotteries illegal." This is not bad for a paper which is continually advertising bucket-shops of the worst description, and which for a considerable time gave prominence to the following advertisement:

A.A.A.—"HOW MONEY MAKES MONEY."
—Showing how everybody with £1 capital upwards may make regular weekly profits; £2 10s. weekly, with £10 capital; more or less in proportion; no work; no worry.—Ridley and Skinner, 24, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C. Gratis and post free to all mentioning this paper.

One of our readers informs us that he applied to the firm, and, on mentioning the *Daily News*, immediately received, gratis, from them their "Handbook" on gambling, together with a form of application to accompany any "speculation" he might be disposed to make through them. This precious handbook tells you "how, when, and in what direction to speculate," and how huge profits may be made by "continually operating." Altogether, betting on horse-racing becomes an innocent pastime compared with the form of gambling thus propagated by the *Daily News*.

Addressing our constituents the other night we likened the action of the Government in permitting those 16,000 Chinese coolies to come into South Africa under licences granted in the last days of the late Administration to the case of a physician called in to a dipsomaniac, and who, being told that 16,000 gallons of whisky had been ordered in by a corrupt butler, decided that in fairness to the wine merchant they must be consumed before the patient was taken off alcoholic drink. And the illustration was appreciated.

Does any London member want to secure a big "turn" from the provinces? Then let him get Mr. A. E. Dunn, M.P., down to his meeting. He is great.

Sir Conan Doyle has put the strange case of Edalji on a new plane. He has gone fully into the evidence which secured the young man's conviction, discovered other evidence which was not available, or if available was neglected at the trial, and clinches his presentation of the case with the damning fact—damning so far as the prosecution are concerned—that, though Edalji was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude, he has been released without explanation, with four years of his time unserved. Is Edalji innocent? Has justice been done, or is he, like Beck, a victim of a police blunder?

Apart from the absence of motive—and human motive is a subtle thing—we confess that the police evidence as reported did not convince us. But a Judge and jury had heard prosecution and defence alike, and if the truth had been told, the severity of the sentence fairly balanced the atrocity of the crime. What has the Home Secretary discovered since? Does he think that the man was wrongly convicted, or is it that he thinks the Judge was too severe? In the one case, there can be no just reason why Edalji should not have a free pardon, and this Mr. Gladstone has refused. In the other, what must one think of the Judge? This affair is another illustration of the danger and the folly of forcing a Home Secretary to act as a Court of Criminal Appeal. He can never be logical, and his functions as policeman and judge are too mixed to admit of satisfactory public performance. There are certainly *prima facie* reasons for special inquiry, and Mr. Gladstone should be pressed to grant it. It is the Hugh Watt case over again. And it is another argument in favour of a Court of Criminal Appeal.

We are growing a little weary of the Rev. Mr. Campbell and his "white hair and boyish face"; his "cap and velveteen coat, and his pig and his cow." And now comes his conversion to what somebody has called the "New Theology," but which is as old as scientific biblical criticism itself. It is, however, significant that Mr. Campbell can see his way to reconcile his opinions to his position as Pastor of the City Temple; that he can conscientiously preach the new faith in the pulpit built up on the old one. Mrs. Humphry Ward may see in Mr. Campbell a new "Robert Elsmere" with a difference. Whether the difference will quite please her is another matter. Robert Elsmere lost his wife and resigned his pulpit when he found that he must intellectually face beliefs which cut deep and wide into the old, old story as he had learned it, and knew it, and drawn it into his soul. Thirty-nine Articles notwithstanding, Elsmere was wrong in giving up his pulpit; Mr. Campbell, without Thirty-nine Articles to bind him, is probably right to stay where he is. He need not be less a Christian, now that he sees things with clearer eyes.

Yet it is as well that he should know where he stands, what he has thrown over, and what remains to him. He believes there is no real distinction between humanity and deity; "our being is the same as God's." He believes that every man is a potential Christ, whom he interprets as human nature at its highest. He claims the right to handle the Bible as freely and critically as any other book. He believes in the immortality of the soul only because every individual consciousness is a ray of the indestructible universal consciousness. He believes the story of the Fall to be untrue. He rejects wholly the only idea of the Atonement which is ever preached from the pulpit—that God so loved the world that He gave up His only begotten Son to be crucified, so that the victim might expiate the iniquity of us all. Apparently the new gospel has not fluttered the City Temple at all. Nobody wonders; nobody protests; nobody clamours to have the reverend gentleman burned at the stake. Verily, the times have changed.

For the position of Mr. Campbell involves more than is revealed. If he were questioned closely, he would doubtless admit that he had lightened his theological ship even more than appears. For that claim to judge and handle the Bible like any other printed book involves that its story must stand or fall by the adequacy of the internal and external evidence brought to interpret it and corroborate it. Mr. Campbell sacrifices the Adamic Creation, the Fall, the Flood, the Atonement, and the Divinity of Jesus, but with them must go the Resurrection, and that long line of New Testament miracles which almost of itself has fashioned orthodox Christianity; they must go—from the loaves and the fishes to the Gadarene pigs. There is no half-way house for Mr. Campbell. He has undertaken to mount the hill, and mount it he must. But it is worth while. At the top is freedom spacious, and light undimmed.

We are in favour of the Channel Tunnel on both private and public grounds—private, because we are bad sailors, and public, because nearly all the military authorities are against it.

The War Office is a remarkable institution, and we are beginning to think that it should be affiliated to Colney Hatch. According to a case recently in the Law Courts, it leases the right to collect and sell its spent shells at a yearly sum of £20. From 10,000 to 20,000 shells are fired annually, and each shell has a brass top weighing one pound, as well as a copper ring of which the value as old metal is sevenpence or ninepence a pound. It was not revealed whether Mr. Haldane has arranged to sell the officials responsible for this contract for sevenpence a pound, but if he has not done so it must be because he cannot find anybody willing to take them off his hands at the price. Sevenpence per hundredweight is about the value of that kind of commodity at the current prices in the labour market.

We ventured to hope that, after the War Stores scandals, Mr. Haldane would begin to spell that blessed word "efficiency" with a greater talent than the ineffable Brodrick and the stupendous Arnold-Forster. The War Office method of selling waste shells is its method of selling its hay and commissariat "extras." It has forgotten everything and learned nothing. If it can see no more than £20 a year in its spent shells, then it is not unreasonable to assume that big leakages in the sale of waste material are occurring in other directions. Obviously, one of the quickest roads to fortune in these days is to get oneself appointed a contractor to the War Office—which appears to be of no use in time of war, and no ornament in time of peace.

Before the new Betting Act, it used to be said that when you wanted the policeman on his beat he was always off it. But this must have been a slander and a derision. Robert has now arisen. Robert is visible in the midst. Robert is putting enough brains into this Betting Act to serve for a brilliant capture of a boy playing pitch-and-toss or of an old woman in the last stages of irresponsible inebriety. Take as an instance what has occurred at Birkenhead. There Robert went forth for many days to secure a conviction; business was awfully dull. So two of him dressed himself like a widow sorrowing behind a curtain of crape, jumped into a cab, watched one Mike O'Reilly taking bets, alighted, "threw off the widow's weeds," and gathered Mike unto the seat of judgment. What the next disguise of Robert will be in Birkenhead is now matter for general speculation, and we understand the populace are betting six to four that it will be something between a hurdy-gurdy man and the solo clarionet in a German band. Meanwhile, the local burglars are talking of disguising themselves as policemen.

Someone has been advocating the foundation of an Anti-lending League, and trots out the old gags about the surest way of losing a friend being to have lent him money. But surely few loans (at any rate, loans of the kind contemplated by an Anti-Lending League) are intended to be repaid. He-that lendeth to the poor, or lendeth to a lord, so doeth out of kindness or out of social ambition. And neither object would be attained if the lender constantly recalled the obligation, if only by sour looks. Such a lender would be stupid as well as churlish. Whereas a smiling lender may always keep his friends, who make much of him.

According to Miss Christabel Pankhurst, it is not the intention of the sufferingettes to run Parliamentary candidates on their own account, but to organise opposition to Liberals. Our memory may be failing, but we seem to remember that they organised opposition to the Liberal candidate at Huddersfield. No, it is not by such methods that their cause will prevail. Anything in the nature of spite must be avoided. The essence of their argument is, or should be, that thousands of refined, educated and intelligent women are by law declared unfit for citizenship, whilst their most ignorant menials are their political masters.

Another passive resistance agitation is promised by way of keeping the row going. This is as Mr. Clifford and his friends please. But, in our opinion, the country has had enough of the "religious" cry. It is dead tired of seeing national education made the battledore and shuttlecock of the creeds. The next Education Bill, if Liberal, will be rather different. Meanwhile, Mr. Clifford should be taught that the Liberal party cannot be dragged at his heels. As Mr. Labouchere says, Nonconformists are always airing their consciences as though they had in some peculiar way a monopoly of conscience. Nobody minds them having a conscience, but they really should not make such a fuss about it. Incredible as it may sound, even Agnostics and Secularists have consciences. But they don't shout about it.

One of our minor poets, now deceased, by name Mr. William Shakon, once made the luminous observation that Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay, might stop a hole to keep the wind away. But it appears that a worse fate sometimes happens to distinguished persons born long before Cæsar. The revelation of an eminent Egyptologist is that in these days it frequently happens that Imperial Egyptian mummies are used as fire-lighters; and this at an epoch, remember, when fire-lighters can be purchased at three bundles the penny in plain wood, or four squares a penny if composed of resin and sawdust. This callous conduct on the part of the Egyptians is deserving of the severest censure. It is like going into the crypt at Westminster Abbey and digging up the ashes of our dead kings and queens in order to provide firing to frizzle the Dean's breakfast bacon. The British Government have the first claim to all Egyptian mummies discovered, and, we presume, a right to prevent sacrilegious persons from discovering them. When a person has been a mummy in a deep hole or on a stone shelf for four thousand years it seems only fair to let him remain there. To make a fire-lighter or an exhibit of him after stripping him of the garments of decency is an outrageous departure from good form.

The City Corporation have another nice little job to give away. The death of Mr. White Winzar leaves the office of Lord Mayor's Swordbearer vacant, and instead of the Lord Mayor carrying the sword himself when he feels strong enough, or leaving it behind when he does not, there will be a wild rush for the menial office, and the superannuated captain or the able-bodied poor relation or nominee of a Duke who can work up the biggest canvas will get the salary of £600 a year. Then for the next forty years, if living, he will dress himself in a gorgeous uniform, travel around with the Lord Mayor, and bear that sword with as much importance as if he were a butler carrying a bottle of '48 port to his lord and master. Applications for the salary should be sent in immediately, or unemployed persons preferring to call personally should line up outside the Guildhall till moved on by the nearest policeman.

John Bull's Biscuits.

AWARD No. 173.

For allowing one of the nurses to keep a small pig "as a pet dog,"

THE SECRETARY OF THE BARRY HOSPITAL
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

AWARD No. 174.

For informing its readers that "by smoking a strong pipe in his turnip fields several times nightly, a farmer in the heart of the stag country has succeeded in keeping deer from trespassing on his land,"

THE *DAILY MAIL*
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

AWARD No. 175.

For reporting a case of recovery of a child which had "to all intents and purposes died," and had "ceased to breathe for twenty minutes,"

MR. G. F. ROUMIEN
(Coroner for West Surrey)
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

AWARD No. 176.

For making the amazingly original remark, "I won't have my Court turned into a theatre,"

THE COMMON SERJEANT
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

AWARD No. 177.

For stating, in the "Grand Magazine," that he knew a girl who "was able to see with the tip of her ear," and that subsequently "her sense of taste was transplanted to her knee, her sense of smell to her toes."

PROFESSOR LOMBROSO
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

THE AMERICAN GIRL IN PARIS.

(Being the letters of Miss Peggy Warrender, of Richmond, Va., to her favourite aunt.)

MY DEAREST AUNTIE,—I shall never cease admiring the consistency in taste of the French women. From the cut of a gown to the adjustment of a dainty veil, there is art in everything they wear and in the manner of wearing it.

And because the ideas of the people create the demand, the shops that furnish all this loveliness are correspondingly interesting. In America you know how "shopping" bores one. But in Paris it becomes almost a fascination. The windows present such an array of original and *chic* designs that you are first tempted to stop and look, and with the looking you are caught. Dad's pocketbook has grown so light that he has refused to accompany us any more in the neighbourhood of these "magasins de luxe."

If, thus far, I have only given you the most superficial impressions of Paris, it is because there are so many things to tell you about, I don't know where to begin. The day we came Dad asked me what I wished to see first, and I said, "The Louvre and Notre-Dame." I suppose that would be the choice of most Americans.

The Louvre! What a variety of images that word awakens in the minds of different people according to their temperaments. Also as to whether one has been reading Thomas Carlyle, Victor Hugo, or Alexandre Dumas, or Baedecker. What a grand old pile it is—venerable with years of history—and as a museum it is an endless holiday. And in considering the works of art so lavishly spread there you may remember that in this room a king was born, or in that, one died. But now it all belongs to the people. How vehemently will most Frenchmen fight for their Republican ideas. You find "Liberté, Equalité, Fraternité," written all over Paris. At first we thought it was very beautiful, but afterwards it seemed almost as though "they do protest too much." To go back to the Louvre. The two things that will haunt you always, even after the most hurried visit, are the Venus of Milo and the Winged Victory. With both of these great works, the placing has done much to make them impressive. The Venus is at the end of a long and narrow corridor, in a little *salle* of its own, hung with red velvet and mirrors. As you are approaching it you are in a semi-darkness, and the Salle de Venus is very well lighted, so that the effect is most beautiful. It often happens that the great goddess is surrounded by a crowd of tourists, with a harsh-voiced guide to enumerate her beauties something after the fashion of an auctioneer who sells the family heirlooms. It would be very annoying if it were not so funny. These American tourists who are capable of "doing" Paris, Versailles, and St. Cloud in a day—you meet them everywhere—these are the people who expose us to ridicule in the eyes of our neighbours. How many thousands come over here every summer who have never given an hour to the study of art or history and yet feel themselves perfectly competent to pass judgment on the wonders of time, to which men have devoted their lives in study! If only half of the money we spend in foreign travel could be devoted to a preparation for it, I'm sure the results would appear in an increase of culture.

These and kindred thoughts have occurred to me many times in watching some Baedeckered American standing in front of the Venus or the Mona Lisa and consulting his book to see if he were looking at something "really worth while."

I said the Venus and the Victory were equally well placed. The Victory bursts on your view as you are ascending the main staircase, from the uppermost landing of which she reigns supreme. There is plenty of space on every side for a good perspective.

To name more than two or three of the great canvases contained in this priceless collection would be impossible in a letter. Besides, you have read of them many times. But you will be interested to hear that the Mona Lisa seemed to all of us greater even than we had imagined. Dad has become so fascinated with that sphinx-like smile, that it has quite ceased to be paint and canvas for him. What a pity the Italians did not know all the secrets of mixing oils which have preserved for us the Flemish school in all its freshness. For if the Mona Lisa can be so entrancing, discoloured as it is, what must it have been three hundred years ago? In quite a different state of preservation are the works with which Rubens adorned the walls of this same palace for Marie de Medici. They might have been painted yesterday, so fresh they are.

You, who are so fond of the Barbizon school, how you would revel in the collection of the Louvre. You will find them upstairs and down. On the third floor there is room after room of the nineteenth century French masters. Such Corot's, such Rousseau's, and such Ingre's! Well, to adequately describe the Louvre is to attempt the impossible, so I will stop before I get lost. And we have seen nothing in it but pictures and sculpture. All other collections we pass by, as we have seen their equals or nearly their equals in New York and London. The buildings themselves are like story-books, wherein you may read the tales of the centuries, from Francis I. down to the last Napoleon. And where the Tuileries stood is now the favourite haunt of nursemaids and their charges, a pleasure ground which gives no sign of the tragedies which have passed above it. It is the same with the Place de la Concorde, which, now so tranquil and so beautiful, you cannot realise was the same place where the awful guillotine rained blood, where fiends incarnate sat knitting as the heads fell, and where a daughter of the Cæsars bade good-bye to life, and was carted off in a coffin that cost five francs. You cannot realise, and yet the more you apprehend how such things were possible. They are every whit as excitable, as inflamable to-day as they were a hundred years ago. And such imaginations! And even yet the lower classes are so brutal. The coachmen of Paris are "les bêtes noires" of every Anglo-Saxon visiting this capital. Such cruelty I have never seen before. The horses are the merest skeletons, but they are beaten regularly every minute or so by their drivers, who never look where they are going, and whose principal object in life seems to be to get to their journey's end and take another drink to render them yet more amiable. We have often offered an extra tip to a coachman if he would spare his horse, and the man has really tried. But it never succeeds. The old habit is too much for him. We have here commenced to appreciate the marvellous driving of the London "cabby" and the perfect control of traffic in that city. But you can't have all of the virtues without some of the vices. And where you have hot blood and imagination, coolness and gravity would be a little inconsistent, wouldn't they? And don't think all of the French are to be judged by its "scum" class. The line of demarcation is tremendously strong. It is only another evidence of the power of the class system which the Revolution broke down, at least in principle. But someway or other, Republicanism doesn't seem quite consistent with the French temperament. They love kings and pomps and pageants, and, above all things, to be amused. In the moment of death I'm sure the true Frenchman would have time to laugh at a jest. When Shakespeare conceived Mercutio, he must have had a Frenchman in mind.

After such a long letter must come a pause. Next time I'm going to tell you about the Quartier Latin and the Luxembourg. Until when and always,

I am your devoted

PEGGY.

"THE WAY OF TRANSGRESSORS IS——"

[A man bearing the name of Charles Dickens has been sentenced to six months' hard labour for stealing a loaf of bread on Christmas Eve.]

That one so named should steal because
He lacked, and no man gave,
Would surely make immortal "Boz"
Uneasy in his grave.
But if in those far shades he learned
How England treats such crimes,
He'd send us back old Scrooge at once
To soften such "Hard Times."

R. W.

DEAR MADAM (or SIR),

May I send you some specimen copies of JOHN BULL *for distribution amongst any of your friends who are not at present readers?*

THE PUBLISHER.

9, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, London.

JAPANESE PHYSICAL TRAINING and SELF-DEFENCE (JU-JITSU), the most unique, perfect, and practical ever introduced for symmetrically developing the whole muscular system, and for making and keeping one PHYSICALLY SOUND and fit. Curative and corrective. The SELF-DEFENCE methods teach one how to defeat brute force without the aid of strength. Absolutely essential for all, young and old of both sexes. Illustrated descriptive book showing methods, etc., sent on receipt of 3d. stamps from the Author, and well-known ENGLISH Instructor, Professor VERNON SMITH, 203, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C. (Tutor to London Volunteers, etc.).

HOW THE CHURCH ARMY ASSISTS THE UNEMPLOYED:

OR, THE SAD TALE OF MR. CHIPS.

1. Mrs. Goodbody informs her woodman, Mr. Chips, that in future he need not call, as, having become a subscriber to the Church Army, "who do so much good for the unemployed," she intends to give the local branch of that organisation her orders for firewood. The donkey feels the situation keenly, as several of his master's customers have been lost from the same cause.

2. First arrival of Church Army wood. The officer gives Mrs. Goodbody an outline of how his work assists the unemployed by setting any willing man to wood-chopping.

I.
THE DONKEY WEEPS.

II.
MRS. GOODBODY IS CHARMED.

III.
MRS. GOODBODY LEARNS THE TRUTH.

IV.
MR. CHIPS IS HIMSELF AGAIN.

Mrs. G. is charmed by the thought of being able to assist so benevolent an enterprise, and promises to obtain the support of her friends.

3. The Church Army wood continues to be regularly delivered, but after some weeks Mrs. Goodbody is surprised to find that her old woodman, Chips, has become an inmate of the Army Labour Home. Further particulars of Church Army work that Mr. Chips could give soon told Mrs. G. that although the Church Army certainly did take men off the unemployed list when it set them to work at chopping firewood, yet, so long as the demand for that article was quite a limited one, it simply meant that men like Mr. Chips, who previously got a living at the firewood trade, through lack of business were soon pushed on to the unemployed list. Therefore, in spite of the repeated protests of the officer that the Church Army really "did a lot of good," yes, "really it does," Mrs. Goodbody became convinced that even if the C.A. does take men off one end of the unemployed list, the competition of the Church Army itself in the Labour market forces men on to the other end of the list of unemployed. Balance of good to the unemployed as a body, "Nil!"

4. Mrs. Goodbody is no longer a supporter of the Church Army. Being practical, she has tried her best to put right the harm done to Mr. Chips by the unthinking action of herself and friends, and has started him in business once more. Her sly guesses as to who are the real individuals for which the Church Army "does so much good" creates great tribulation in the heart of the Church Army officer, who was just calling for his quarterly subscription.

IN THE CITY.

THE WALL PAPER MANUFACTURERS, LTD.

ARE THEIR SHARES WORTH THE PRESENT QUOTATION?

A correspondent, moved by the glowing description given by a financial weekly paper of the position and prospects of this company, thought of investing in it, but being a business and a prudent man, determined to look into the figures for himself before doing so. He has done so in a very able way and he sends us the result of his examination. His figures are so suggestive that we give below an extract from his letter to the secretary of the company which covers them. But before doing so it may be convenient to say a few words about the company, and the chairman's speech at the general annual meeting, held at the end of November last.

The company was formed in 1897 for the purpose of bringing about an increase of prices and a reduction of competition amongst the principal wall paper manufacturers, and it is one of the few Trusts in this country that can point to a successful career. It includes about 98 per cent. of the wall paper manufacturing trade of the United Kingdom, and the idea of the amalgamation was not, to quote from the prospectus, "to unduly inflate or unduly increase prices," but by means of the amalgamation to increase economies and reduce the cost of production. The authorised capital was originally £4,000,000, but it has since been increased to £4,200,000. Of this £4,183,468 has been issued, which is divided as follows:—

First Mortgage Debenture Stock	...	£996,113
Preference shares of £1 each	... ...	996,113
Ordinary shares of £1 each	... ...	1,095,621
Deferred shares of £1 each	... ...	1,095,621
		£4,183,468

All the Ordinary and Deferred shares were taken by the vendors in part payment of the purchase price, and it was agreed that they were to be held for a period of five years from September 1, 1899. Since then some of these shares have found their way into the hands of the public. As we write the Debenture stock is quoted at £98, the Preference shares at 21s. 3d., the Ordinary shares at 28s., and the Deferred shares at 4s. 6d. The Ordinary shares have been paid a steady 8 per cent. dividend. The Deferred shares have not as yet entered the dividend-paying list.

The certified profits of the combination for the year preceding amalgamation (1897) were £199,030. Since then the profits have been considerably higher with the exception of last year. In 1900 they were £216,144; in 1903, £249,061; in 1905, £243,327; in 1906, £178,908. It will be seen that there was a very considerable shrinkage in the profits of last year, but this is partly accounted for by the fact that a special amount (£50,000) was applied from the profits of the year for the purpose of writing off specially for a loss on closed trade. But even when allowance is made for this, trading profits show a falling off, as compared with the previous year, to quote the chairman, "from £15,000 to £20,000," which he attributed to "lower prices and higher cost of paper." But when asked how it was that in a company like this, with practically the monopoly of the trade of the country, when higher cost prevailed higher prices could not be obtained, he evaded reply although pressed for it. He did not think he could say more than that "the increased profits depended upon their management and economy of production." Asked again whether the special amount written off (£50,000), loss on closed trading, was all that had to be written off on that account, there was again no reply. This reticence is to be regretted. The allowance for depreciation has been £30.000 each year since the formation of the company, or roughly 1 per cent., which seems very inadequate. And having regard to the amount of the capital, it cannot be said that the Reserve, which stands at £180,000, and to which nothing was added last year, is sufficient.

We now come to our correspondent's letter. Having asked the directors in vain for information, he put before them his own view of the position, as follows:—

HOW to INCREASE your INCOME
STRIKING SUCCESS!
Write at Once for Pamphlet (post free on mentioning this paper.)
The City and Westminster Exchange, Ltd.
Stock and Share Dealers,
Queen Anne's Chambers, Westminster, S.W.
Telephone Nos. 867 Westminster, and 7765 Gerrard.
Telegraphic Address, "Stockwork," London.

Granted that you have established a reserve fund of £180,000, one would like to know if this reserve fund is for the purpose of setting aside profits and re-investing the amount in gilt-edged securities for the purpose of creating a fund for redemption of the debentures at 110 per cent. in 1919.

As a business man one makes provision for the redemption of capital, and I certainly think that before paying 8 per cent. on your ordinary shares, it would be more advantageous to bring the capital to a value compatible with the value of its security, as, if one judges by the goodwill paid under one agreement entered into on the construction of your Trust, and bases the amount payable for goodwill to the other interested companies and parties on that figure, the cost thereof comes out at £2,236,667, if my working out is correct, and something should certainly be allowed for the depreciation which has undoubtedly taken place.

With regard to the debtors' outstanding £337,780, how much of this amount was outstanding at the 31st August, 1906, and as nothing is said in the auditor's report as to bills receivable, it would be interesting to know whether any allowance has been made for contingent liabilities on the bills discounted and in hand.

With regard to the investments amounting to £301,496, what is the market value of these to-day? Are they treated in the accounts at, or under cost, and in the event of the company requiring it could the "Other Securities" be realised at anything like £137,000?

Judging from the last two years' accounts, it appears to me that a great number of share transactions have taken place, and of the 5,000 transfer deeds which have been lodged for registration during the last two years, it would be interesting to know how many were signed by the directors or their nominees as transferrers.

From my investigation of your balance-sheet at the 31st August, 1906, taking the goodwill at the figure referred to above, and allowing 20 per cent. depreciation on the investments, I make the assets of your company, without taking into consideration stock-in-trade, which of course represents an unknown quantity, seeing that the basis of arriving at the figure is unknown to me, and might represent selling price less discounts, as follows:—

	£
Capital	1,077,122
Investments	271,347
Debtors	337,780
Bills receivable (no allowance made for contingent liabilities thereon)	120,755
Cash	33,477
Equalling	1,840,481
Less, creditors, rent, rates and taxes	45,102
Leaving an available balance of	1,795,379
From which must be deducted the amount of the 4 per cent. First Mortgage Debentures	996,113
Leaving	£799,266

plus the value of the stock, whatever that may be, for shareholders holding in the aggregate £3,187,355 worth of shares.

There is a big difference between the capital of £3,187,355 and our correspondent's estimate of present assets. As to the balance-sheet, it is to be noted that there is nothing to show whether stock-in-trade (£512,237) is taken at cost price, or at selling price, less discount. Then as to creditors standing in the balance-sheet (£92,653), it will be noticed that discounts have been deducted. Why? Surely all accounts are gross until they are paid? Since when has it been the custom to deduct discounts from creditors until the accounts are paid?

We shall have something more to say about the position of this Company on another occasion. Meantime we have said sufficient to warrant investors asking whether the ordinary shares at their present quotation are not a good deal above value; and whether an 8 per cent. dividend ought to have been declared last November.

JUNIOR ARMY AND NAVY STORES.

We have received the following letter from a shareholder in the Stores:—

I have read your article on the above Stores and it is evident the present management is gradually allowing the concern to drift from bad to worse. I had expected at the last shareholders' meeting to hear from the Chairman, after the deplorable results of the year's trading, the welcome intelligence that the directors had at last considered it necessary to replace the manager at the head of affairs. However, like a good many more shareholders, I had to accept the excuses offered, submit to a reduction of dividend, and be contented with looking forward to better days, or, at least, some improved management. With such a record year of prosperity in trade, to hear things are as bad, or even no better, is the last straw, and suggests the complete unsuitability of the man the shareholders and directors depend upon, whose business experience, I understand, is limited to knowledge gained as a former secretary of the company. Cannot any other man be found worthy of promotion, even from among the successful branch establishments, who would be better fitted to this important post? If the directors are unwilling to make an announcement of this kind, then it is the shareholders' immediate duty to concert together and take such action as they may be advised for the better protection of their property.

We commend the suggestion of the writer to the Board. Why is it that the Aldershot Branch of the Stores is doing so well? The answer is, good management. Why is it that the Dublin Branch is doing well? The same answer applies—good management. Why is it that the headquarters in Regent Street are doing so badly? The answer is bad management, inefficient management, extravagant management. There will be no change unless the shareholders see the necessity for it, and seeing, use the power that is with them to enforce it. The report for the past year will soon be in their hands. Let them study it and attend the general meeting, and see to it that there is radical change and reform at headquarters—that the business is put under the control of some experienced man, a capable manager, with a Board to supervise him, where supervision may be necessary, composed not of elderly military gentlemen, but of practical

business men cognisant of the wants of a business like that carried on by the Junior Army and Navy Stores.

The following letter is from a shareholder of ten years' standing. He writes:—

> Your report of the position of the above Stores is such that an immediate investigation of the position must be made. I am a shareholder, and I have ceased dealing with the Stores solely through its bad management, and how many more are there like myself, I wonder? With such an income and grand, prominent premises, it seems quite inexplicable why it should not succeed. If one manager cannot make it pay, why not try another? My proxy and many others I could obtain are at the disposal of any shareholder who will take an interest in the reorganisation. My age prohibits me doing more.

The following is from another shareholder:—

> As an old shareholder and a disheartened one, might I make the suggestion of appointing three or four business men well known in the City to inquire into the reason of the gradually decreasing turnover of the Stores. There must be someone at its head at present unable to manage it. With such a wonderfully prosperous year for business it seems incredible that the returns are not larger. Some such inquiry as I suggest must be made at once, before it gets any worse.

CARTER'S DEEP LEADS.

At the time of going to press there is considerable inquiry for these shares, the price being 1⅛-1¼. We are glad, however, to be able to state that no attempt has been made to create an artificial, fictitious market—such as too frequently characterises the appearance of new issues, only to "dry up" the moment allotment has taken place. As we have before pointed out, the Company, is under very responsible and respectable management, and we look to it with confidence to set an example to other parent undertakings connected with deep lead mining. We do not want a repetition of the scandals which marked the early days of the West Australian and West African market. We predict a prosperous career for this concern—which we believe will constitute another addition to Mr. William Carter's already long list of successes.

THE ANCHOR BENEFIT SOCIETY.

A Nottingham correspondent sends us a letter he has received from this Society, whose head office, it seems, is 28, Victoria Street, Westminster. The letter is dated January 15th, and the following is an extract from it:—

> The Society proposes to work on commission basis, with a guaranteed minimum of £2 per week. This commission should bring in £5 to £6 per week at least, within six months.
>
> The whole of the federated business will be taken over by our staff, and a premium of £40 will be required, in consideration of which an agreement will be given for the appointment for life, with the right of nominating successor.

Our correspondent asks us if we advise him to pay the £40. He would be glad to do so if he was quite sure of its insuring him an annuity of £2 a week, with the likelihood of an income of two or three hundred a year, and that for life. Our correspondent is not strange in his partiality for this kind of agreement, if only the guarantee of its conditions being fulfilled is sufficient. But here comes the weak point of the business. Who is to guarantee the Anchor Benefit Society? Before we make some remarks upon the origin of this concern perhaps some of our readers who have had correspondence or dealings with it will communicate with us.

WARING AND GILLOW, LTD.

"Arrolithic, Limited," of 18, Berners Street, Oxford Street, write us that they never *served* a writ upon Messrs. Waring and Gillow, and request us to state that "it was a mistake." Our list of writs was taken from the files at the Record Office, and they were correctly described as "issued" in the main part of the article, though it is true that lower down they were referred to as having been "served"—the natural presumption, of course, being that any firm which went to the expense and trouble of issuing a writ would serve it. However, for some reason, such was not the case in this particular instance, and as "Arrolithic, Ltd." desire this explanation to be made, we willingly insert it, belated as it is.

HOME RAILS.

So far the Home Railway dividends and reports have not been encouraging. Fortunately, the Metropolitan's experience is likely to prove exceptional, but the small amount of the Great Eastern's gross traffic gain, and the actual falling-off in the income of the South Eastern-Chatham have proved a serious damper to market optimism. We warned our readers not to be misled by interested calculations based upon the weekly traffic estimates. Dearer coal, rising wages, heavier rates and taxes, and increased capital charges must all have their effect upon net revenue figures. Even with cheaper money in prospect there is little hope for Home Rails.

THE RISE IN MOTORS.

Humbers have provided the Industrial market sensation of the last few days. In the main their advance is due to the fact that several operators found themselves short of the shares last account, and the advance has certainly been out of proportion to the actual business recorded. With these and other motor shares, however, a strong propelling force is the confident belief in a prosperous trade outlook that prevails. Darracqs have jumped on an order for 4,000 motor cabs, which are to be paid for by a company yet to be formed. Charrons have relapsed to ½ discount, underwriters of the recent issue being badly landed. Dunlops have been helped by the introduction of the Company's new steel-studded tyre.

Referring to the fall in Siberian Mining shares, our friend "Magpie," of the *Sunday Times*, says that the telegram stating "that the Czar had approved the statutes of the Orsk, and that sanction of the Troitz will follow," has finally "squelched" the adverse rumours about the security of the titles. That is putting it much too high. Adverse rumours can only be "squelched" by authoritative and exhaustive information as to the legal position of these companies.

Underwriters of Anglo-Spanish Copper are compelled to take up 60 per cent., but they hope that the French investor will come to their relief.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

SAFE INVESTMENT.—COUNTRY SUBSCRIBER (Newquay).—The concern is young, and its capital is not large, but it is respectably managed.

SAFE INVESTMENT.—E. G. L. (Wandsworth).—See our answer to "Subscriber."

MASHONALAND DEBENTURES.—HIGHBURY PARK.—We think not.

NORTH BRITISH AND MERCANTILE INSURANCE COMPANY.—J. S. T. (Balham).—It is a company in the first rank of insurance companies.

VALUE OF SHARES.—F. L. T. (Crouch End).—(1) The shares you name have no value. (2) We do not think you could do better than go to the Hand in Hand, of New Bridge Street, E.C.

TIN SHARES.—A. J. (Hammersmith).—We think well of the second of the two companies you name.

PREMIUM BONDS.—INQUISITIVE (Kinvers).—Have nothing to do with the people to whose advertisements you refer.

BRITISH AFRICA OPTIONS PROPERTIES.—DOUBTFUL (Manchester).—We will look into the matter and answer you next week.

MINING SHARES.—W. H. A. (Liven).—The last three of the four shares you name are very speculative.

WEST AUSTRALIAN SHARES.—ALPHA (Kingslea).—They are not quoted because there are no dealings in them. We do not think they will ever be of much value.

UNITED GOLD MINES OF WEST AFRICA.—H. L. (London).—We should not put more money into it.

BRITISH ALUMINIUM COMPANY.—E. S. (Bisley).—After a chequered youth it is doing better, and its prospects are not unpromising.

BEST INSURANCE COMPANY.—A. H. C. (South Ealing).—For your purpose the best insurance company would be the United Kingdom Temperance and General Provident Institution, 1, Adelaide Place, E.C.

LONDON CLERKS' ASSOCIATION.—W. M. (Chingford).—We know of no good reason why you should not do so.

NATIONAL INVESTORS' AND SPECULATORS' COMPANY.—CLERK (Oxford).—We know nothing about it.

VARIOUS SHARES.—READER (Teignmouth).—We should hold for the present, but sell upon any rise.

BRITISH HOMES INSURANCE CORPORATION.—W. B. L. (London) would like to dispose of a policy in this Corporation.

ENGLISH SEWING COTTONS. X. Y. Z. (Partick, N.B.).—(1) Yes, much better. (2) Sell the mining shares.

OUTSIDE BROKERS.—NEW READER (Coventry).—Better have nothing to do with any of them.

VALUE OF SHARES.—M. Z. (Birkenhead).—We see little likelihood of improvement in the price. The firm you name are outside brokers.

AUTOMATIC WHEEL PHONOGRAPHS.—C. R. (London).—What is it you want to know? The papers you send us speak for themselves.

BRITISH HOMES PROVIDENT ASSURANCE SOCIETY.—AMATIS (London).—Yes, we think so, but read the conditions carefully before taking up the Bond.

LADIES' DRESS ASSOCIATION.—C. P. R. (London).—The share is of no present value.

LIABILITY UPON SHARES.—ANDREW (Croydon).—We fear your sister is liable. She should sell the shares if she can do so.

CHARING CROSS BANK.—TROOPER (Bath).—We have no reason to question the solvency of the bank, but we cannot accept the responsibility of advising deposits at such a high rate of interest.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE COMPANY.—J. L. (Stratford).—You need have no fear in dealing with this company.

THE SCOTTISH TEMPERANCE ASSURANCE COMPANY.—SCOTCH (Streatham).—The answer to your question is in the negative.

MIDDLESBURGH STEAM COAL AND COKE COMPANY.—WESTWARD HO (Cardiff).—What is your price?

POLICY FOR £1,000.—A. M. M. (Guernsey).—We will communicate with our correspondent, and write you further in due course.

THE OASCACA RUBBER COMPANY.—F. H. (Lambeth).—We have no information respecting this American concern.

SAFE INVESTMENT.—DOUBTFUL (Birmingham).—(1) Previous answers in this column will give you the information you want. (2) These outside brokers are very respectable people. (3) We do not recommend buying shares on the Deposit Cover system.

THREE MONTHS' OPTIONS.—WITICURA (Leeds).—(1) Of course, it all depends whether the probable rise becomes actual. (2) Steamship companies are not doing very well just now, and we should not advise purchase of the shares you name, although it is quite likely this particular company will repeat its dividends of last year.

CHARING CROSS BANK.—B. B. B. (Hackney).—See answers to questions above relating to the same institution.

PAID TO THE PEOPLE.

2½ per cent. on Daily Current Account Balances.
4 per cent. to 6 per cent. on Deposits.
6 per cent. on Thrift Account (up to £10).
6 per cent. Dividend on £1 Shares.

FARROW'S BANK, Ltd. (The People's Bank)

22, NEW BRIDGE STREET, LUDGATE CIRCUS, LONDON, E.C.,
And at Brighton, Birmingham, Croydon & Norwich.

International Securities Syndicate.—J. C. L. (Bayswater).—We are obliged to you for the letter and documents you send us from these people. We strongly advise you to have nothing to do with them.

Charing Cross Bank.—T. W. T. (Pontypridd).—We believe the bank to be financially sound, and it has been doing business for many years; but we never recommend deposits on the rates of interest you mention.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Savings' Bank Corporation.—Mancunian (Manchester).—If you will send us a report of the case to which you refer we will reply to the question you put to us.

Bovril, Limited.—Jhane Bonup (Aylesford).—(1) We have not much fancy for the deferred shares of this company. (2) The bank you name is under responsible management, but we should prefer a larger and older institution for deposit purposes.

Provident Association of London.—J. S. C. (Forest Gate).—The association is financially strong, and is conducted honourably, but we never advise taking out 30 year bonds. Life is too short, and has too many risks, to allow it to be done without great chance of ultimate loss.

Continental Municipal Bonds.—Sr. Gronen (Llandudno).—The City of Paris Bonds are quite sound, but if you buy them do not buy through the International Securities Syndicate, for reasons repeatedly given on this page.

Investment of £600.—W. B. (Birmingham).—You have, of course, to reckon with the £47 10s. liability if you take shares of the London City and Midland Bank, but there is only remote possibility of any of it being called up. The London and River Plate, with a liability of only £10, would, at the present price, give you 5½, or the National Discount Company, with a liability of £16, would give you 5½, and the security would be ample.

Milestone and Staniforth.—J. P. D. (Highbury) complains that a year ago, when this company was floated, he took up 50 shares, but although he has written to the Secretary, Mr. W. H. Fleetwood, a director of Spencer Santos and Co., he is unable to get any reply. Perhaps the Secretary will take note of this.

Kent Collieries, Limited.—T. H. F. (Temple).—It is rather difficult to say; reports are very contradictory. The predecessors of the present company did so much to destroy public confidence in the venture that it is not easy to restore it. Still, there are grounds for believing that the outlook is, on the whole, promising. If you hold shares we should keep them, but we can hardly advise you to buy.

Bye-Marginal Investment System.—W. H. W. (Plymouth).—(1) You cannot be a reader of John Bull, or you would know that our opinion is unfavourable. (2) See our answer to T. H. F.

Collecting Book.—A. J. B. (Hampstead).—We could give you no useful information as to the value of a collecting book, being quite ignorant as to it.

The Peoples' Land Building and Dwellings Company.—J. M. (Holmwood).—(1) We have no reason to suppose that they would not treat you fairly. (2) You seem to be under some misapprehension as to Raphael Tuck and Son, Limited. We are not aware that they "put advertisements in certain papers when they have shares for disposal." Their shares are bought in the ordinary way upon the Stock Exchange.

Safe Building Society.—H. J. (Balham).—(1) The Temperance Building is an excellently managed institution, and you can leave your money with it without fear. (2) The Charing Cross Bank is able to pay the high interest it offers because its business is of a usurious character. (3) If you will tell us the amount of your savings you want to invest we shall be better able to advise you as to the kind of security most suitable for your purpose.

London Deep Leads, Victoria.—R. H. J. (West Hartlepool).—We think there is a further rise in these, but don't forget Carter's Deep Leads.

Savings' Bank Deposit.—"Cestrian" (Chepstow).—We should advise you to keep your money where it is safe, and not risk it in the venture you name.

Life and Health Assurance Association.—W. G. D. (Hammersmith).—We can hardly express an opinion upon the matter without fuller information than you give us. You say that the Life and Health Association has called upon your father-in-law to pay a sum of £4 11s. 5d., "being," to quote their letter to him, "the amount of premium No. 4763," and they threaten proceedings unless the money is paid; but you say that no policy has been taken out. Let us know what actually happened. There must have been negotiations of some sort.

Three Companies Guarantee.—J. J. (Saffron Walden).—The right of a company to guarantee the payment of interest upon shares in another company depends upon the power given by the Articles of Association. We agree with you, indeed, we have given publicity to the opinion that "the case of the B.S.A. Company seems particularly bad, as, apart from the fact that the shareholders are entitled to the first distribution of any cash that may be available for that purpose, the company is nothing more, at present at any rate, than a huge insolvent white elephant with colossal liabilities." The moral obligation of the company not to act as it has done in this guarantee matter is plain, but its legal position is another matter.

Japanese Bonds.—Nippon (Belfast).—The Bonds of the Japanese Government, and also those of the Municipality of Tokyo, are sound investments. You say you have most of your savings in them, "giving good returns and providing unexceptionable security," and you cannot understand why we do not mention them when asked by readers for good securities. However good they may be, we prefer, speaking generally, home securities, and advise accordingly.

Norwich Union Old Age Pension Scheme.—Ping Pong (Bradford).—The scheme seems one you may advantageously join.

London Motor 'Bus Company.—H. S. J. (Ashford).—We are not much in love with motor 'bus shares. The outlook is anything but clear, and although this company has shown good results like the rest of the motor companies, it has to reckon with exceptional risks.

Japanese Stock.—Desmo (Southsea).—Japanese Fours at their present quotation would give you something over 4½ per cent., a good return upon sound security, always assuming, of course, that Japan pursues a pacific policy. A war, for example, with the United States, would probably mean financial collapse.

J. G. Graves' Superannuation Fund.—You ask us whether employees leaving Mr. Graves' employ are entitled "to draw their own subscriptions, and in addition 2½ per cent. interest on their subscriptions." You add that "some have lately left the firm, and have only received their bare money, and no interest." There would seem to be no doubt that the retiring employee is entitled not only to the return of his capital monies, but to 2½ per cent. cumulative interest. Section 24 of the Rules is quite clear on this point. "Members who have joined the fund on and after the 1st day of January, 1903, shall receive back the whole of the contributions paid by them with compound interest," at the rate of 2½ per cent. per annum, "calculated half-yearly on the amount paid by them at the end of each preceding half year, *i.e.*, 30th June and 31st December respectively."

Law Union and Crown Insurance Company.—Verax (Sheffield).—The capital of the company is £150,000 in £10 shares, and there is an issue of 4 per cent. debenture stock of £383,360.

Insurance for Boys.—H. F. B. (Highworth).—Many of the insurance companies would supply what you want, but we do not think you would be better served in this particular insurance than by the Hand in Hand of New Bridge Street, E.C.

Provident Homes Investment Company. F. W. A.—It is not easy to dispose of these certificates.

National Share Exchange.—Would Be (Dudley).—We cannot advise it.

The Patriotic Investment Company.—A. C. (Buckaven).—Can you send us fuller particulars?

The Central Association of Accountants.—Ecce Homo (Barnsley).—We know of nothing to its prejudice.

Hallens Lieben Patents Syndicate.—Erasmus (Bristol).—We shall be glad if you will send us the papers you mention. The gentleman named as living at Cairo was a bankrupt not long ago.

IN THE COURTS.

IN RESTRAINT OF TRADE.

Our reference to Mr. Justice Neville's decision in the case of Leetham and Sons *v.* White, where a firm of millers succeeded in enforcing an agreement prohibiting an ex-employee from pursuing his business as miller's agent in any part of the United Kingdom for a year after the date of the severance of his connection with the firm in question, has brought us many letters from others who have been like victims of the agreements which Mr. Justice Neville so strongly condemned. It may be interesting to give some of the experiences described. Here is what one correspondent says:—

> Having been a great admirer of your journal since commencement, and recommending same to my numerous friends in travelling through this country, I thought perhaps I could give you some facts concerning myself that will be of interest to commercial men generally. Noting in your last issue, p. 35, "In the Courts," I had a similar experience. I was employed as traveller for a firm of engineers making bakery and other machinery, and signed an agreement in which was the enclosed clause. I left this firm on my own account, and started in business, and was doing well, when they informed me that they were getting an injunction stopping me from being in business or travelling for anyone else for twelve months. Mind you, this was for the whole of the United Kingdom. Not a bad radius, was it? Well, they got it; but I did not give up my business, having invested my all in it, but went on. Some time ago I received a visit from a baker whom I sold a machine to. The next I heard was they would immediately get a commitment order, which they did, and I was in Buxton gaol for five weeks, when my counsel applied for my release. The firm actually opposed it, and I arranged to pay them damages and costs if they would not oppose it, so I got my release. Since then the man who bought the machine had to return it, being an undischarged bankrupt. This man, no doubt, was put up to buy a machine, and had no idea of paying for it. However, the business is doing well, and I am out of the trouble. But what I want to know from you is this—if Mr. D. J. White, as on p. 35, wins his appeal, can I take the matter up again and go for the firm. It shows you how particular a man must be in obtaining employment. I was no use at any other business. If I worked I was to go to prison, and if I did not work and my family starved, I must still go to prison for not maintaining them.

The agreement referred to is as below:—

> 14. On the determination of the said employment the said William Arthur Charles shall not for the period of twelve calendar months thereafter either directly or indirectly sell or solicit or take orders for the sale of wood-chopping machinery and bakers' machinery or any part or parts thereof in any part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Isle of Man either on his own account or for any other person or persons firm or company without the previous consent in writing of the said Adolphus Barron and Co., first had and obtained.

We fear our correspondent has no remedy, but what a scandalous state of affairs this letter discloses! Here is a law so unjust that a Judge of the High Court, no sensation-loving lawyer, but one of the ablest Chancery Judges, protests from the Bench against having to administer it, saying that it is judge-made law, and he never enforces it without a keen sense of the wrong he is doing, and under this judge-made law a firm of employers is enabled to prevent one who has been their servant, who left of his own accord, who whilst with them discharged his duty faithfully, from pursuing the only business for which he is fit, in any part of the United Kingdom. More, when under the stress of necessity, he disregards the order of the court, and continues to pursue his calling, so that his wife and children may not starve, they throw him into prison, keep him there five weeks, and only release him when he has paid ruinous costs. We should further add that our correspondent did not start business in the town to which his late employers belong, but twenty-four miles away.

Another correspondent writes:—

> I note in your issue of January 12 the article dealing with the case of an action brought by Messrs. Leetham and Sons against a former traveller for breach of agreement. I have held similar agreements which I enclose for your perusal, which I thought perhaps would interest you. I refer you to clause 7, with which the point in question deals. I am very pleased to see that someone has taken this matter up. Nowadays a young man only needs to sign half-a-dozen such contracts and he is practically done for on the road.

The restraining clause runs as follows:—

> The Traveller shall not without the consent in writing of the Employers during the service created by this Agreement, or within the period of five years next after the expiration of such service, either on his own behalf, or on behalf of any other person or persons, and either directly or indirectly carry on or undertake the business of a Black Lead or Blue Manufacturer or Dealer, or any other business similar to that carried on by the Employers, nor act as Traveller, Clerk, or Servant to, or Agent of any person or persons who will carry on such business, under the pain of forfeiting for any and every breach of this clause of the Agreement hereby created, the sum of Two Hundred Pounds, as and for ascertained or liquidated damages.

Is there no Member of Parliament who will put this matter right and prevent the law being made the agent of tyranny, as it is under the present judicial reading of it as it applies to agreements in restraint of trade?*

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* Since the above was written, the Court of Appeal has reversed Mr. Justice Neville's decision, but it has done so not because the agreement was bad as to the Cleveland Flour Mills, but because Leetham and Sons sought to bring under its operation other businesses in which they were interested in different parts of the United Kingdom.—Ed. John Bull.

CERTIFICATES OF CHARACTER.

Referring to Messrs. Leetham and Sons, a correspondent writes:—

> They have absorbed O. and R. Appleton, Limited, Victoria Flour Mills, though they trade as A. and R. A., Limited, Rodger Shackleton and Sons, Limited, Leeds, and Milners, of Elland. All trade three mills are theirs, also Mills, Limited, of York, and they bought up sufficient shares in the Cleveland Milling Company to obtain a controlling influence, and now run the show. Nothing less than a Flour Combine. It is not a question "What will Leethams' do," but rather "What won't Leethams' do." All this is well known in the trade.

In connection with these agreements in restraint of trade, our attention has been directed to the refusal of firms to give a certificate of character when a man leaves their employment. In Germany such certificates are compulsory. If a servant leaves a firm he has the right to require the firm to state what his conduct has been during the time he has been with it, and why he leaves. If that statement is untrue, and unfair to the ex-employee, then the law will right him by giving damages. It will be plain to anyone who considers the matter that this is a very necessary and right law. It may well be that a man has served a firm for many years faithfully and well, and in a moment of temper he has said something which, perhaps, he ought not to have said, and which ensures his dismissal; or there may be some other venial offence leading to dismissal. Past good service ought not to be nullified by such offences, and it ought not to be in the power of the employer, by refusing to state the truth, to deprive the man of the means of earning his livelihood, as in very many cases he is deprived when he cannot refer to his past employers for proof of character.

We hope that in the coming session of Parliament some influential member will bring in a Bill not only to mend the law as interpreted by Mr. Justice Neville with respect to contracts in restraint of trade, but to compel employers to give certificates of character of the kind indicated above. We are a little surprised that the two powerful associations representing commercial travellers—a powerful and most intelligent body of men—should not have moved in these two matters before now, and equally surprised that leading commercial travellers have not brought the pressure to bear upon the two associations which would no doubt have sufficed to induce them to take action. We know that there is very strong feeling in the matter amongst commercial travellers, and we would remind them, and those who represent them, that Parliament will do nothing to help them unless they make it plain that they themselves are united and urgent in their demand for protection.

LEGAL ANSWERS.

We only undertake to answer short legal questions in this column. In all cases where complicated questions, involving the consideration of documents, are put to us a fee of 5s. must accompany the inquiry.

Queriets are requested to write on one side only of the paper, and to write separate questions on separate slips of paper.

COLLECTOR'S DEMAND.—ROUND (Colchester).—We do not think, after looking at the special Act of Parliament regulating the tolls, that the collector was right in his demand, but is it worth while for you to incur heavy litigation costs with a doubtful result?

PORTUGUESE REGISTRATION.—BLACK (Oporto).—The company you mention is under the Portuguese law. It is registered in Lisbon, and has committees in London, Paris, and Brussels. The jurisdiction is Portuguese.

WASTE LAND.—GIFFORD (Taunton).—The land you refer to is evidently waste land, and vested in the parish.

THE BEST REMEDY.—ASHLEY (Darlington).—Your best remedy is a sale under the power.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DAMAGE.—RADFORD (Purley).—You were on the wrong side of the road, and the driver is not responsible for the damage.

LIEN ON WORK DONE.—GRIFFITHS (Woolwich).—You have a lien for the work done, and can refuse to deliver until the account is paid.

DELIVERY OF STOCK.—DRAPER (Kilburn).—Apply to the broker for delivery of the stock, and enforce the claim. Instruct your solicitor without delay.

SUMMONS FOR TRESPASS.—NICKLEY (Ewell).—Proceed by summons for trespass in pursuit of game. It is a case for the County Bench.

ORDER OF SEPARATION.—MARY (Broadstairs).—The magistrates can make an order for separation, and fix the alimony.

BURIAL LAW.—SHARP (Horsham).—The recent decision as to burial where new houses are built within the limited area is in your favour.

APPORTIONMENT OF COMPENSATION.—MOON (Forest Gate).—Action is in the county court under the Employers' Liability Act. The judge will apportion the compensation between the widow and children.

CANADIAN LAW.—BARLOW (Toronto).—We do not advise on points of Canadian law.

APPLICATION TO LANDLORD.—ALLEN (Bexley).—Apply to the landlord for leave. If he refuses in an arbitrary manner, you will be safe, as under the wording of the covenant no breach will have been committed.

CHURCHWARDENS.—GEORGE (Northampton).—The churchwardens are elected at the Easter Vestry meeting, one on the nomination of the rector, called "the rector's warden," the other by vote of the vestry, called "the people's warden."

APPLICATION FOR LICENCES.—PARTRIDGE (Margate).—Application must be made to the London County Council for the music and dancing licence for the hall.

ASSURANCE MONIES.—JAP (Bournemouth).—The trustees of the child are the proper persons to move in the matter.

OLD AGE PENSION.—£500 at age 60 from a wealthy insurance office is guaranteed for less than £2 a quarter, present age 25. No examination. In the event of earlier death, all money returned. Intending assurers desiring moderate premiums with big bonuses, write GORDON MANNERING AND CO., Experts, Harpenden, Herts.

SHAMS.

THE ARTIZANS' DWELLINGS COMPANY AND GOSPEL TENTS.

There is, it seems, what is called a Gospel Tent in Lordship Lane, and Mr. G. J. Earle has sent to all the men in the employment of the Artizans, Labourers, and General Dwellings Company, Limited, at Wood Green, the following curious invitation:—

> "DEAR FRIEND,—Allow me to give you personally a very pressing invitation to the Tent, before it is taken down, to hear the gospel preached.
>
> "Your coming or not will not make any difference, as far as I am concerned, to you on the works; I have 'no axe to grind,' I am only concerned for your soul's welfare.
>
> "Eternity is coming on!
> "Death is on your track!
> "Heaven or Hell lie before you!
>
> "I hope to see you at the tent Sunday at 7.30 p.m., or Tuesday or Friday at same time.
>
> "Yours to serve for Christ's sake,
> "G. J. EARLE."

Commenting upon this document, a local contemporary, the Wood Green *Sentinel*, makes the following pertinent remarks:—

> "A phrase in the letter itself indicates the objectionable nature of this kind of pressure—the pressure, practically, of an employer, 'Your coming or not will not make any difference.' The mere mention of the possibility of it will be enough to alarm some timid men who, with good enough reason, have more the fear of their employer in them than the fear of God and what lies before them in eternity. When Christians have abolished the state of things which puts some men at the mercy of others for their bare livelihood, they will be able to make this kind of approach with a better chance of being honestly confronted. As things are they stand a good chance of being hypocritically humbugged. The only way of dissipating the 'axe-grinding' suspicion is to courageously fling away the axe!"

And who is Mr. G. J. Earle, that godly man who is so anxious that his men should "hear the Gospel preached"?

Mr. G. J. Earle is Surveyor to the Artizans, Labourers, and General Dwellings Company, Limited, and since the death of Sir Richard Farrant appears to be the person in control there his official position being that of Surveyor. We believe we are correct in saying that of late Mr. Earle has been responsible for the discharge of many of the leading officials of the company. The Assistant Secretary, a man of blameless record, who had been with the company eighteen years, and had been promised the reversion of the Secretaryship, instead of getting it when the late Secretary died, got his discharge. The Registrar, a married man with four children, with twenty years' service behind him, was dismissed, and has been looking in vain for employment for the last eignteen months. Others have been treated similarly. In no case was it suggested that the official concerned was unworthy, was other than, to use language that must be very familiar to Mr. Earle, a good and faithful servant. But they have gone to make way for persons who, to say the least, will not serve the company better. Why? Because these men are readier listeners to Mr. Earle, because they are "with him" in street- corner preaching.

We do not say there is no good to be derived from street-corner preaching. For aught we know Mr. Earle may be moved by the best of motives. But we suggest to him that practice should be kept somewhere near precept, and that honest and capable servants ought not to be discharged because they are not ready to play the hypocrite, and groan and pull long faces with Mr. Earle at street corners.

We invite the attention of the shareholders of the company to this matter. The list contains some of the greatest names in the country. We put it to Lord Rosebery, and to other gentlemen who are shareholders in the company, and whose names are household words amongst us, do they approve of wholesale dismissals because the dismissed are slow to pray with Mr. Earle at the corner? We are quite sure they do not, and they can stop the injustice if they will. If they think the facts are not as we have stated them, let them cause inquiry to be made into the cases of the late Assistant Secretary and the late Registrar, to name only two of many, and if they find that these and other ex-officials have been dismissed for no good cause, but only because they would not be hypocrites, let them see to it, as we are sure they will, that such injustice shall not be repeated.

HOW CANADA IS BOOMED.

The article on this subject published in our issue of January 5th, and written by Mr. H. O. Mercer, has brought us many comments. Mr. James Belford points out inaccuracies of fact. He writes:—

I have read an article in the last issue of your interesting weekly, entitled "How Canada is Boomed." With much of Mr. Mercer's reasoning I am quite in agreement. For instance, Canada would be much better off had General Booth never discovered her. But the legitimate efforts the Canadian Government, and reputable Canadian firms are making to encourage immigration to that country are surely worthy of the cordial support of Englishmen. When Mr. Mercer waxes facetious and accuses the Canadian Government, Lord Rothschild, and various other people as working for the Canadian Pacific Railway, we smile, as in politeness bound, for surely he does not mean it seriously. One is never certain of an Englishman's little joke. They are distinctly peculiar to this island, and are not to be interpreted lightly by foreigners, colonials, etc., but this must be one, for a well-informed person like Mr. Mercer knows that this same Canadian Government is now building one-half of the Grand Trunk Pacific Transcontinental Railway, a competitor of the C.P.R. He also knows that the Canadian Northern Railway has practically attained transcontinental proportions, or does he?—for he says later in his letter that the Barr Colony is still ninety miles from the railway—when all the world but Mr. Mercer knows that trains have been running through the district for a year, and that Lloydminster is now a flourishing town. So perhaps Mr. Mercer is not joking, but has been hibernating. Evidently he is one of a class of Englishmen who have done all the Colonies incalculable harm. He has made a flying trip through Canada years ago, and on the strength of that poses as an authority. My dear Sir, please realise that the world moves. With his slating of the Rev. Isaac Barr I am quite in accord; but even in England I think I have heard of swindlers of a more gigantic character. At the present time the Barr colonists are happy and prosperous.

To-day Canada offers your people homes and independence. Nine years hence these facilities will be exhausted. While the Englishman listens to Mr. Mercer and other Jeremiahs of that ilk, the other nations are pouring in.

Of course, to a mighty nation like England, which fears no foreign foe, which has no domestic problems, and provides all her sons and daughters with an excellent living wage, it can matter little whether Canada remains British or not. But I can conceive of circumstances, when English trade is depressed, when armed foes threaten, when workmen are unable to secure work, under which the help and assistance of Canada might be helpful.

One more slight correction and I have done. Mr. Mercer speaks of Canada as a dependency. He may be technically correct. As a matter of fact, Canada stands squarely on her own feet, and asks favours from none. She will advance, even should he still frown. Loyal she is to British institutions, but it might be worth while for Englishmen to stop and think—she is not crowding her loyalty on England. She holds the future within herself.

Her sons died on South African battlefields to uphold the honour of England's flag, and her return is the cheap sneers of Mr. Mercer and his kind.

Another correspondent, whose tone is less judicial than we should like, but who assures us he writes from personal experience, says:—

Having read the articles re Canada in JOHN BULL of this and last week, I think it would be a good thing if you could open your columns for letters, etc., on or about "Canada," as a lot of people will soon be thinking of going to Canada, and only find out their mistake when they arrive in the country of wheat and plenty (of disappointments).

The article by "H. O. Mercer" in last week's JOHN BULL is very interesting, and to the point; his last words are words of wisdom.

The article in this week's JOHN BULL, last part of second paragraph, is only too true, and people going out should understand that it is only the shipping people that open their arms to them and tell what a grand place Canada is, and when they have taken the passage money, they do not care 2d. what happens—they have got their little bit, and that is all they care about.

In Canada there are about ten foreigners to one Englishman.* The Canadians are afraid that the Englishman will take matters into his own hands, that is why the English are not loved in Canada (or wanted).

Re cheap railway fares. The fare on the railway is cheap to the emigrant if he goes right away west; but suppose that he stops in Montreal, or even goes as far west as Winnipeg, and then stops a week or two to see what's going, he then finds that the fare is not 1 cent but 3 cents a mile, and as the Canadians think nothing of 100 or so miles, one can soon get an idea of what it will cost to travel in Canada; *i.e.*, if he goes straight away west, say, 100 miles, it will cost a dollar (4s. 2d.); if he wants to stop a few weeks it will then cost him 12s. 6d.; it's always 3 cents a mile to go from west to east, even if one has only been in the country a few days, the great idea being to send people, especially young fellows and boys, to farmers as far west as possible, and then when the poor emigrant has reached his destination he finds he has got to work (work did I say, I mean slave) 16 hours every day. Up at 5.30 a.m., breakfast 7.30 a.m., dinner 1.30 p.m., tea (in Canada called supper) 6.30 p.m., bed 9.30 p.m. In the summer they try to get the 24 hours in, and what does a youngster get for this, 5 to 10 dollars a year and his keep; his food costs the farmer practically nothing, and his bed perhaps is in the loft.

He then writes home to his people saying he is doing well and happy. Why? Because they did not want him to go; he said he would get on etc.! His pride or pluck, and the fact that he gave up a good or decent job, will not let him tell the truth.

Let people go to Canada by all means, but don't let them think that it is all honey!

The other side of the picture is put by the writer of the following letter:—

In your issue of January 5 appeared a long article, entitled "How Canada is Boomed," by a Mr. H. Ord Mercer, which is calculated to produce a false impression as to the methods of the Dominion emigration officials.

The writer's account of the conduct of the organiser of the "Barr Colony" is substantially correct. The attempt to found an "All-British" settlement was doomed to be a partial failure, if only because British emigrants are necessarily ignorant of Western agriculture, and must learn from the example of experienced neighbours, Canadians and Americans and settlers from the old country, who have gone through the mill. Knowing this, the Dominion Government refused to be responsible for the success of Barr's scheme, though the officials of the Department of the Interior were instructed to give every assistance in their power in the difficult task of placing the 2,000 emigrants on the tract of land reserved for them. Barr made no effort to arrange for passport, supplies, etc., at the "jumping-off" place on the railway, and the whole labour of disposing of the mob (which contained many specimens of the beer-soaking, hopeless, soapless Britisher, who is not wanted in Canada any more than he is wanted at home), fell on the shoulders of the emigration officers, the North-West Mounted Police, and Mr. Lloyd, whose services will not readily be forgotten by the decent element—the great majority after all—of the voyagers by the "Lake Manitoba." If anybody interested in this matter will write to the flourishing town of Lloydminster, he will learn that Mr. Mercer's figures are hopelessly incorrect. Not more than 50 of the whole number who reached Saskatoon have left Canada. Of the rest, quite half are settled on the land, and the others have found work in the West, where every man willing to use his hands can be sure of earning a livelihood, even in winter-time. The emigration officials at the prairie end of the route worked like slaves in order to minimise the hardships of the first two or three months, and the name of Mr. Speers—the officer in charge of this colossal task—is justly respected by every Barr colonist now settled in the Provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta, and by those who are now earning the necessary capital for a start in farming.

I went through the Barr Colony area in 1903 and talked with many of the emigrants, and with the members of the North-West Mounted Police whose patrol lines pass that way, and can guarantee the truth of the foregoing statements. Many of the emigrants knew as much about farming as the lusty beggars who seize unoccupied pieces of land in London, and collect beer-money from the passers by. One gentleman "from town" had built himself a sod hut—bound to turn into a mud-heap with the first day's rain, and was languidly planting potatoes at the end of July. Generally speaking, the women were better "men" than their husbands; some of the former disgusted the Canadians by swigging beer in the saloons—a habit discreditable in Canada. But they were not afraid of work, and did not go into Saskatoon and turn themselves into wall-props and kept their grumbling for home consumption.

The able-bodied, able-minded Englishman is welcome in Canada, and will always do well there, but the feckless, fashionless wastrel, the waste-products of your industrial system of cheapness at any price, and archers who draw the long bow, ar not wanted there.

It is well to hear both sides.

*No.—ED. JOHN BULL.

A PLEA FOR STRONG DRINK.

We have received the following effusion from a gentleman who is evidently a strong partisan of crusted wine and crusted Conservatism:—

The question arises, are we as good as our fathers were? That is to say, mentally and physically?

Look around us; or rather let us take one specific case—that rendezvous of most of the ablest men of the day, the House of Commons. Is there in that august Assemblage to-day any one who could lead the house at the age of 24? Where are your Pitts? They don't exist, they can't exist, in the present day. The statesmen of the present day are suckled on weak whiskey and water, with the result that their oratory and administration are of the same mean order.

Nay, I am wrong. Some of the statesmen of to-day are nurtured on afternoon tea. Bah! The idea is beyond belief. We who call ourselves Britons are governed by laws germinated in the brains of so-called statesmen by an infusion of tea, or a mild dilution of barley spirit. It needs but for barley-water to become the staple drink of our law makers, and the disruption of the Empire will have arrived.

Tea has displaced sherry at five o'clock, and whiskey has displaced claret and port at dinner. Are we the better for it? No, a thousand times, no! Tea is a restorative, so is wine, but tea acts temporarily as a tonic to the nerves, while wine has the same effect, and is a restorative indeed.

To what do we owe the plague of nerves from which the women of England at the present day suffer? The answer is obvious—digestions undermined and ruined by tea drinking.

Why is it that the younger generation of men of the present day complain of liver and the like? How can they expect otherwise when they take diluted spirit with their food instead of the juice of the grape? Wine is an assimilator of food as well as a restorative; it is a digestive—whiskey an intoxicant.

And whom have we to blame for this? The blame lies with that profession who ought to know most of such things, but who in reality know least. I state this knowing that I hit a tender spot, a very tender spot, in the self-satisfaction of the Harley Street autocrat. He knows that all men and women must drink something, and he knows also that a large proportion of them work or play at such a high pressure that they need a liquor stronger than water. Does he study the subject? Not a bit. He knows what to do if a man breaks his leg, but not what a man should drink in order that he may preserve his health.

He tells the public that sherry is bilious, claret and port are gouty, champagne and hocks are acid, and he adds, if you want to keep healthy, drink a little whiskey and water with your meals. Small wonder that digestions are impaired and the Liberals have such a large majority! We are not men nowadays, we are worms.

We commend these reflections to the Government when they are framing their new Licensing Bill.

FOR JOHN BULL'S WOMENFOLK.

By Mrs. Bull.

[Mrs. Bull will be pleased to receive, from her women readers, suggestions and contributions for this page.]

The Postcard Smile.

Why do they do it? It was started by a young musical-comedy actress, I believe, with better teeth than the rest, and it spread like an epidemic. Then the photo postcards came. That fanned the flame. And finally a much-advertised unguent for the teeth set it going, till it raged, in season and out of season, like the influenza. And now they smile, smile; in snowstorms, in picture hats, in automobiles, in cosy corners, they smile! Certainly in the forties there was a song called "Her Bright Smile Haunts Me Still," but that meant a fleeting, ephemeral thing—not the broad, fixed, strenuous grin, "the smile that won't come off," that now greets one from every shop window. Perhaps there is a fashion in expressions, as in other things. We are not, after all, far removed from the Chimpanzee. We blushed in the fifties, looked demure in the sixties, lackadaisical in the seventies, and to-day—we smile!

Chiffons.

The ephemeralities of dress in the way of dainty chiffons and mousseline de soie, though apparently dedicated to summer, recognise no season in their adoption for evening wear, but flourish all the year round. For winter ball toilettes, chiffon and mousseline, together with net, are pre-eminent, the newest idea from Paris being hand-painted chiffon robes, the design so arranged that it forms a deep border to the skirt and appears again on the corsage and sleeves. Large pink and yellow roses are favourite subjects, clustering round the hem of the skirt and creeping upwards sometimes as far as the knees.

Flannelette and Mortality.

If there is one dress material more dangerous than another, it is cheap flannelette, which, as has recently been asserted, is responsible for over four hundred deaths in England and Wales in a single year alone. It is, of course, the inflammability of the stuff that is the source of danger, and the unguarded fire-grate is mainly responsible for the ignition of the material—more so than matches or candles. According to the latest figures given by the coroners of England and Wales, the deaths through unprotected fire-grates in a year were 3,331, and in 412 of these cases flannelette clothing caught fire. Adoption of fire-guards would, it seems, reduce the dangers of inflammable flannelette by 70 to 80 per cent. All flannelette is not open to the charge laid at the door of the inferior variety, and, since it is stated that the treating of the cheap material with chemicals which would kill its liability to sudden flame need not involve a cost exceeding a farthing a yard, it seems a pity that any flannelette should be sold which has not been so treated. It is a material in everyday use by children of the poor, and these little folk are consequently exposed to grave danger thereby, for their mothers are naturally of the class who buy the cheapest procurable article, and, for another thing, the children of the slums are necessarily left a great deal to themselves. The wonder is that they do not meet with more accidents. Cheap side-combs near an open flame are as dangerous as flannelette; but, happily, children do not wear such things.

The New Conversation.

There is one topic of conversation now—the Zancigs, coupled with mind-reading. The feats of the Alhambra celebrities have given quite a new turn to drawing-room chatter. At the weekly "At Home," at evening receptions, at clubs, at restaurants, conversation inevitably turns upon the power of the mind over the body, and it is becoming the fashion for people to acknowledge hitherto hidden gifts, and assert their powers to control messages, and so on. The other day, at an "At Home" held by the family of a certain well-known painter, a lady visitor who happened to be among the guests informed me, quite coolly, that she herself was able to influence people far away in the matter of writing to her exactly what she wished them to say. "But is it not a great effort to you?" I asked. To which she replied, "Not at all. It is quite simple."

What with telepathy and long-distance photography, aeroplanes, the transmission of messages to mid-ocean, and other wonderful things of recent discovery, we shall soon cease to marvel at anything; and perhaps the day is not far distant when we shall hang up our wings with our hats in the hall, and, like Peter Pan, fly up to the second floor without troubling to go in at the front door.

DIARY INSURANCE SCHEMES.

Our readers may have seen the reply we gave to a correspondent in last week's issue regarding the validity of the Insurance Policy Coupons contained in Messrs. Charles Letts's Diaries. During the past few weeks we have received a number of inquiries as to the value of the Insurance Coupons contained in this well-known series of Diaries, and we accordingly thought it would be of sufficient interest to our readers to interview Messrs. Letts, and ascertain from them precisely the scope of Insurance and other details of interest.

In the year 1900 Charles Letts and Co. first included an Accident Insurance Policy as a feature of their Diaries, being the first publishers to include such a feature. Practically without exception, every diary publisher now includes an Insurance Coupon in their publications, but that issued by Messrs. Charles Letts and Co. offers greater advantages than that contained in any other series. Year by year their publications increase in popularity; as many as 10,198 registrations were received in a single day early in the present month, and nearly 300,000 persons have adopted this system of Insurance for the current year.

Each Charles Letts Pocket Book or Diary includes a £1,000 Accident Insurance Coupon, providing £1,000 in the event of death resulting from Railway Accident (including electric, underground, or overhead railways); £500 if killed by Steam, Electric, Cable, or Horseway Tram Car, or by Licensed Omnibus, Cab, or Motor Car; with £250 if totally disabled, and £100 if partially disabled. This Insurance remains valid from the date of registration of the owner's name at the General Accident, Fire, and Life Assurance Corporation's Head Office at Perth. Such registration involves the nominal fee of 2d., or, if desired, 6d. may be paid for the registration, and this fee entitles the holder to additional advantages, the insurance then being extended to accident of travel on the Continent, and providing a payment of £3 per week if incapacitated by certain stated forms of sickness—viz., Typhoid or Scarlet Fever, Measles, and Small-pox (limit, three weeks). This section of the Insurance remains in operation only so long as the sum of £500, deposited by the publishers with the General Accident, Fire, and Life Assurance Corporation, Ltd., remains unexhausted.

In the recent accident at Elliott Junction the General Accident, Fire, and Life Assurance Corporation, Ltd., received in connection with Charles Letts's specialities no less than six claims, two of which (each for £1,000) have already been settled. Two were found on examination to be invalid, and two remain for the present in abeyance, the victims still lying seriously ill. Less than three months previous to this accident—namely, in the Grantham Disaster—the General Accident, Fire, and Life Assurance Corporation, Ltd., received two claims in connection with Messrs. Charles Letts's specialities, involving the payment of £2,000.

Another feature of Charles Letts's Diaries is a £500 Burglary Insurance Policy, valid on payment of a registration fee of 5s. On inquiry we find this to be about half the premium usually charged for such an insurance policy. This policy is reasonable in its conditions, and allows three months' non-occupancy.

These risks are covered by the General Accident, Fire, and Life Assurance Corporation, Ltd., with headquarters at Perth, and offices in all parts of the globe. This company possesses capital and reserves of over £1,000,000 sterling, their bonds are accepted by all departments of His Majesty's Government, and, financially speaking, their position is thoroughly sound. Our readers, therefore, need have no hesitation in availing themselves of the Accident and Burglary Policies contained in Charles Letts's Pocket-Books and Diaries—they offer extraordinary value, and all bona-fide claims in connection with the Insurance Coupons will certainly be met.

JOHN BULL'S POST-CARDS.

[JOHN BULL *drops a few post-cards to some of his friends and acquaintances.*]

Mr. H. E. Hooper, of the "Times" Newspaper.

Sir,—I am afraid I cannot condole with you. My sympathy, whatever it may be worth, is not for you. In fact, I entirely concur in the severe remarks which Judge Rentoul addressed to you. With blaring trumpets and shameless shawms, you made day and night hideous; you raved, ranted and roared; you fawned, threatened, asked, advised, and strove, until thousands of poor fools had become your debtors for the very doubtful advantage of possessing an ancient and useless encyclopædia. Among the poorest of your victims was a metal-worker named Howe. He was evidently a man with aspirations as well as credulity. He believed that knowledge is power (forgetting that ignorance is bliss). He also believed your insinuations that the possession of an ancient encyclopædia (a back-number, in fact) would supply him with the key to all knowledge. He paid a small sum down and received your white elephant. I can imagine his pleasure and pride when the huge, unwieldy monster reached his humble home. I can see him displaying the volumes to his wife and children, turning over the leaves with his boon companions, and preaching to them about the advantages of literature over beer or navy-cut. He may even have quoted some trite truism by the Lord Avebury about books being a man's best friends. But, unfortunately, he had not digested his lordship's other obvious reflections about the danger of debt. As the months passed, the encyclopædia, strangely enough, did not help him on in life. On the contrary, business grew worse and worse. It was a constant struggle to find the money to satisfy the harpies of Printing House Square. He had to do without luxuries. His family had to do without the bit of bacon on Sunday, or the new pair of boots, or the needful bottle of physic—all that he might satisfy his honour and pay his debt to you, oh Prince and King of advertising wiles!

Think what a pleasure the sight of those volumes must have afforded the family all this time. At last the struggle was too great. He had to beg your mercy, to implore you for a little patience. When he could, he would pay you the few pounds which you still claimed. But no! Like any Shylock, you insisted on your pound of flesh. You haled him before the law, and would doubtless have rejoiced to see him cast into prison, with his seed begging their bread. And now you have had the mortification of finding that, after all, Justice does still survive in this England of ours. If you must grind the faces of the poor, go back, I pray, and squeeze your brother Yankees, if you can. Methinks we need another Aliens' Act to keep out such as you.

JOHN BULL.

To Sir Always Lucky Jones, Kingston, Jamaica.

My dear Alf,—I am sorry for you, I am indeed. With that delightfully mixed fervour of philanthropy and business which characterises you in that state of life to which it has pleased Providence to call you, you took a large party of M.P.'s with you to Jamaica, at your own expense. Your idea was to show them the great commercial possibilities of Jamaica, where the bananas and the rum come from. When you had got them there, and they were just beginning to enjoy themselves, there came an earthquake. What do you think will happen now? As soon as those M.P.'s begin to declaim about Jamaica as a place where capitalists will find all the prize-packet, gilt-edged securities, said capitalists will waltz in with the remark, "No, thank you, bananas may be good, and rum may be good, but we prefer Consols to earthquakes." You will now have to shift your pathetic appeal to the jerry-builders.

There is one matter for consolation, however. A banana is one of the few things which is no worse for being in an earthquake, and your position as the Banana King will not be affected in the slightest degree. Indeed, I think your services to our West Indian colony ought to be rewarded by your elevation to Lord Jones. I would much rather the peerage were founded on bananas than on beer.

JOHN BULL.

To His Honour Judge Bacon, of Bloomsbury County Court.

May it please your Honour,—Not only are you a bachelor, but you seem to be rather proud of it. When it was urged in your august court the other day that a certain defendant lived in great style, you remarked, "He has probably got a wife." Apparently you believe that wives lead men to extravagance; which is not invariably true. If you had a wife, you would be surprised what a great deal she could do with a shilling. Give the average wife a shilling, and she will buy half-a-crown's worth of goods with it. Give the average man a shilling, and the most he will get out of it will be a hundred up at billiards, or four bad whiskies and a worse temper.

"When yu hav got a real good wife," said that great philosopher, Josh Billings, "kepe perfectly still, and thank Good every twenty minnits for it." That sentiment has my high approbation, though, of course, there are other kinds of wives. A famous Bishop had one of the other kind, I remember. "Wretched girl," he remarked, in reproving one of the housemaids whom he found listening at the keyhole during an altercation with his wife, "who is it that sees and hears all we do, and before whom even I am but a crushed worm?" "The missus, my lord," replied the girl.

In general, a man gets the wife he deserves, however, and if he cannot make her worth more than he is himself, he isn't worth much. Most wives are an investment; all husbands are a speculation.

JOHN BULL.

W. T. Stead.

Dear Brother Bore,—Allow me to congratulate you upon the fact that there are still a number of persons who take you seriously. You have probably talked more nonsense than any man alive, committed more indiscretions, offended more susceptibilities. With your "Maiden Tribute" you disgusted all decent persons, and no one (perhaps not even yourself) regretted your three months in gaol. Your twaddle about Brother Boer, which should merely have been given to the butterman, roused many worthies to much unnecessary wrath. And now here you are again, clowning at the pantomime season, interviewing statesmen all over the world, being interviewed yourself by foreign newspapers, and being allowed to lay down the law to the Hague Conference. Go to bed-stead.

P.S.—How is Tumpti?

JOHN BULL.

H.R.H. Prince Arthur Frederick Patrick Albert of Connaught.

Sir,—It has been stated by the yellow press that you and your relatives hesitate about your acceptance of the Servian Crown. I understand, however, that you are a plucky young man, and I hope you will pull yourself together. The presence of a British Prince on a Balkan throne would do much to rehabilitate British prestige in the Near East, and, incidentally, to revive British trade there. The Germans are cutting us out in the commerce of those regions. Do not let them cut you out of a throne. When Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg was offered Bulgaria, he did not wait to consult august relatives, but set out with a carpet-bag, and has been a success ever since. As Bismarck said to the present King of Roumania, when he set out on a similar errand, "At any rate, if the worst comes to the worst, it will have been an interesting experience."

JOHN BULL.

THE IRISH EMIGRANT.

"With me bundle on me shoulder
Shure there's no man could be bowlder,
I'm lavin' now the spot I wasn't born in,
But some day I'll take the notion
To come back across the ocean
To me job in dear ould Oireland in the mornin'."

THE LITTLE YELLOW TICKET.

By Jemima Jessica Jinks.

I ran up against the Whytes at a hotel in Bellagio the other day. Violet Whyte had been an old school friend of mine, but I had not seen her for years. And all I had heard was that she had married a rising young painter somewhere in Italy. She carried me off to her sitting-room after dinner, while her husband was playing billiards, and we were soon hard at work discussing old times. She had made the room look very pretty with a lot of odds and ends and quaint silver things, which I picked up and examined carelessly as we talked. My attention was presently attracted by a curious little printed slip which occupied the centre of an elaborately chased frame.

"What *does* this funny little thing mean?" I asked. "I suppose it has got some romantic history. Do tell me about it."

"Oh, that is my dear little yellow ticket, which saved me from drudgery and all sorts of wretchedness," said Violet. "Of course, I'll tell you all about it if it will interest you. Curl yourself up in this cosy armchair and you shall hear its story."

"When I was about seventeen I was seized with a wild craze for painting. Nothing would satisfy me but that I should go to Venice and study there. I had a profound contempt for London schools, and made up my mind that in Italy alone my talents could properly be cultivated. I worried and plagued my poor old father—I was an only child and my mother was dead, so he had nobody to protect him—until he agreed to give up our house in town and migrate to Venice. By the time it was all arranged, however, he cheered up, and began to look forward to our sojourn in a strange land almost as much as I did.

"We took a cheerful little suite of rooms on the Grand Canal, made friends with people, and before long felt as though we had lived in Venice all our lives. I entered as a student at Signor Rambaldi's studio, and there I first met Ronald. He, too, had been fired with enthusiasm for Italian art and lived in an attic on twopence a day, studying hard, and waiting till the turn of Fortune's wheel should make him famous. He used to come and see us sometimes, and give me good advice about my daubs. I was still as keen about painting as ever, and accepted his criticisms gratefully. I used to think of nothing else, and often lay awake at night dreaming of the wonderful pictures I would paint some day.

"One night I remember tossing about for hours and falling at last into a restless, troubled sleep about daybreak. Strange dreams pursued me; one in particular made an immense impression on me, and when I woke every detail was still vividly stamped on my memory.

"I dreamed I was in ancient Babylon, at the famous Feast of Belshazzar. I was thinking to myself what an honour it was for me to witness the historic scene, and I waited impatiently for the mystic hand to commence its writing on the wall. A colossal hand duly appeared, but, to my surprise, instead of beginning the fateful words, 'Mene, mene,' it merely traced three numbers: 7, 12, 80. Then a great black pall seemed to fall over the picture, and I woke up with a jump.

"Next day I went to the studio rather late. I found Ronald on the look-out for me. He helped me to arrange my easel, and seemed in high feather.

"'What makes you so cheerful to-day?' I asked; 'have you got a commission to paint frescoes at the Vatican or have you succeeded to a peerage and £20,000 a year?'

"'No such luck,' he replied. 'A poor beggar like me is obliged to grin and look happy over rather smaller matters than that. I've just sold a little picture to a rich Yankee for a tenner, and in my dreams I already see the road opening before me towards prosperity, fame, and—well, all sorts of other entrancing things!'

"'Oh, talking of dreams,' I said, 'I wish you would interpret the meaning of one I had last night. It was so curiously distinct and vivid that it has been haunting me ever since, and I have a theory that dreams always mean something.'

"'There are such crowds of society palmists and fortune-tellers about now,' said Ronald, 'that I really wonder somebody doesn't strike out a new line as an interpreter of nightmares. I'm certain that with a suite of rooms in Bond Street, weirdly furnished in a gloomy and mysterious style, an effective disguise, and a convincing manner, one might coin pots of money. If only you would promise to help, I'm sure we should soon make the thing a howling success. But tell me your dream now, and I'll promise to translate it as favourably as I would for a five-guinea customer.'

"I related it in a suitably impressive manner, and he listened with amusement till I came to the numbers on the wall when he broke in with considerable excitement:

"'By Jove! In Italy they say it is the luckiest thing in the world to dream of numbers. An Italian would rush straight off and plank all his ready money down at the lottery office. I knew a fellow who thought he heard someone whispering to him in his sleep 13, 30, over and over again. He didn't take the trouble to back them, but a week later, as he was going past one of these *banchi del lotto* he saw his two numbers posted as having come up in the last drawing, a day or two before."

"'That's rather funny. I wonder if it would be worth while tempting fortune with my three numbers,' I said, rather impressed with his little story, and beginning to feel that perhaps I was beloved of the gods, and had been sent this little tip as a special mark of favour.

"'Rather!' he said. 'Come and have tea with me this afternoon at Florian's, and we will go afterwards and put on some pennies at a little *banco* close by.'

"I was rather tired that day, after my wakeful night, and worked slowly and half-heartedly. Four o'clock came at last. I packed up my things, and found Ronald waiting for me at the door. After our little tea-party we marched boldly round to the lottery office, Ronald declaring that my presence was absolutely indispensable, and that I must take the ticket myself or the luck might vanish away. I put on a very unconcerned air, and tried to look as if I were unaware of the fact that a lady is never supposed to enter a *banco del lotto*. Of course, heaps of Italian girls constantly stake on the lottery, but they always send their maids to take the tickets, or, better still, a hunchback of some sort. The clerk looked at us with a knowing smile, while we each put 20 francs on the *terno*—as they call a set of three numbers, and wished us good luck. Of course, he didn't in the least believe we should win, as a *terno* so rarely turns up, but he knew what a big tip he would get if it did come off.

"I don't know if you have ever heard of these State lotteries. You must choose your numbers between one and ninety in sets of two, three, or four, and you can even stake on one number alone, but then the odds are very small. Italians are extraordinarily superstitious, and bet on all sorts of events and dates, especially deaths and murders. There must have been a great run on the lottery the week of poor King Humbert's murder.

"By the time I reached home I heard a clock strike six, and hurried upstairs with rather a guilty conscience, for I knew my father always grew anxious if I were not in by five. I peeped into the sitting-room, but could not see him, so I went into my room to take off my things, thinking probably he had gone out for a walk. When I came back, half an hour later, the sitting-room was still empty, so I went and tapped at his bedroom door. There was no answer, and I turned the handle and went in. I saw him sitting before his writing-table at the further end of the room, and something in his attitude sent a cold chill to my heart. His head had fallen forward on the table, and he looked terribly tired, weary, and depressed as he slept. I went up to him and touched him on the shoulder.

"'Wake up, dear,' I said, cheerfully; 'here I am at last, and ——' But he didn't wake up or take any notice of me. As I gave him a little shake his head only fell on one side. I caught sight of his face, it was ashen. I felt a horrible misgiving, which deepened almost immediately into a certainty. He was not asleep—he was dead.

"I can never bear to think of those next few days. I was simply overwhelmed by the suddenness of the blow. My father's death was due to heart disease, caused by a shock, the doctor said. I soon discovered what the shock was that had cost him his life. In the blotter before him was a letter from his lawyer, announcing that a company in which he had invested all his fortune, against the advice of everyone, had suddenly collapsed, and he was left without a penny in the world save a few hundreds in the bank. When all the various claims were paid I should be penniless.

"What to do I could not think. I had not the means to continue my art training. I had not all the certificates necessary for a modern governess. In fact, I had scarcely enough money to take me back to England. The few relations I had there would not, I knew, do more for me than they could possibly help; besides, I was too proud to beg from them. The more I thought it over, the more pitiable seemed my condition, and there was no one to whom I could turn for help. My friends at the studio did all they could for me through those dreary days. Ronald also came in every day, and arranged many things which a man can do so much better than a woman

"It was Saturday, and the day after my father's funeral. In Italy, you know, they always hurry the burial as much as possible. I was feeling absolutely despondent, not only about the loss of my dear father, which, of course, was a

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—which reached us this week: "Enclosed find P.O. for 3s., being my second payment of that amount for your BUSINESS ENCYCLOPÆDIA. Since I received the work a month ago I find myself more and more satisfied with my bargain—familiarity is making me an adept at 'turning up the Index.' I have already been able to save my employers some trouble through knowledge of various intricate points in business. They are writing you to-day for a set of the BUSINESS ENCYLOPÆDIA for use in their offices: but I venture to think I have 'got my own back' out of mine already. I advise every young man to have his own copy. The articles on Book-keeping and Banking and various systematic studies in themselves are worth the money."

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it will be granted that no detail connected with business has been overlooked, and that the work is a real treasure-house of solid information to the business man. It includes a series of statistical articles and explanatory diagrams by John Holt Schooling. The sixth volume consists of "A Commercial Gazetteer of the World," edited by William Melvin, B.A., dealing with the commercial resources and wealth of the countries of the world, productions, industries, trade, distance from Great Britain, openings for British trade, etc., etc.

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J. 26.1.07 C.A.A.

frightful blow to me, but also about the prospect of starvation which stared me in the face. I had just twelve pounds left in ready money. If I tried to return to England this would instantly be swallowed up, and I was no surer of getting employment there than I was in Venice. At the thought of my miserable plight my courage forsook me suddenly. I buried my face in the sofa cushions and burst into tears. I went on sobbing hopelessly, blind and deaf to everything, and, absorbed in my grief, I did not hear a tap at the door. Suddenly the sound of a step near me made me look up, and I saw Ronald gazing at me with a look of the deepest concern.

"'Miss Innes—Violet darling! Tell me what is the matter? I know I am a brute to pester you when you are so sad, but I simply can't bear to see you suffering so, when I would give my life to make you happy again. Dearest, it is no use hoping you could ever care for me, I suppose, but at least let me try to do something to help you.'

"I suppose it was the sight of my grief that went to Ronald's heart. It certainly could not have been my appearance. Anything plainer or more woebegone and dishevelled than I was at that moment it would have been difficult to find. I was quite sensible of my defects, and fond as I was of Ronald at any time I felt my affection for him redouble on discovering he could like me so much with my pink nose and watery eyes. I felt much too forlorn and miserable to compose the proper sort of speech about his affection being reciprocated and all the rest of it, so I just flung my arms round his neck as he sat beside me and buried my head on his shoulder. It *was* so nice to feel that now I had someone to look after me, one who really minded what became of me, and I felt as if half my troubles had been taken away.

"It is true that things were scarcely more satisfactory than they were before, but nothing seemed to matter half so much. Ronald and I talked things over very seriously. He only just managed to make both ends meet. Now and then he contrived to sell a picture at a fairly good price, and once his name got better known he felt certain of success. However, it would have been madness to marry on such poor prospects, and we agreed to wait and hope that things would soon take a turn for the better. In the meantime, I was to take a small room on the upper floor of the house I had hitherto inhabited, and try to get a few English pupils. Probably nobody would want English lessons, but failing them, Ronald had all sorts of other schemes for me to fill up the time with.

"'Now everything is settled for the immediate future, I am going to take you out for a stroll,' he said presently. 'You have been cooped up far too much lately, and a breath of air will do you lots of good. Run along and put on your hat, there's a good girl,' he added, in a proprietary manner that amused me immensely.

"'Very well,' I said; 'but I don't feel much inclined for the noisy, jostling lanes. Let us take a gondola for an hour and then go into San Marco for a little while. I feel as if I should like to sit there in the quiet and rest.'

"So we drifted along the Grand Canal, watching the stealthy gondolas as they glided by, and talking of ourselves and of the long, long, happy years we were to spend together. Then, as time crept on, we turned back with a sigh to the present, and, stopping at the little landing stage of the Luna, went ashore and across the Piazza to San Marco.

"A crowd arrested our attention outside a building, in which something of interest was evidently going on. The doors were thrown wide open, and we could see a small cathedral chorister, clad in his surplice, thrust his hand into a quaintly-shaped urn and take out a ball. He handed it to someone standing near, who opened it and held up a white card with the number 12 on it, in order that all those standing outside should see.

"'What does all this mean?' I asked Ronald, as we, too, stopped to watch the proceedings.

"'By jove!' he exclaimed, almost at the same instant, in great excitement. 'Why, this is the weekly drawing of the Lotto. Can you remember the numbers we backed last Monday? I had clean forgotten all about it, but *surely* one of them was twelve.'

"'Seven, twelve, and eighty,' I answered. 'Oh, Ronald, just fancy if we were to win! But, of course, we shan't; it's *much* too delightful a thing to happen.'

"Just then the urn which had been revolving stopped, the little chorister gave up the ball again, and retired. It was the fifth drawing, and the number was seven. A moment later all the numbers drawn were run up on a kind of telegraph board fixed against the building, and I could scarcely believe my eyes as I read the numbers—1, 7, 12, 59, 80. Even then I did not realise all that it really meant. But when I got home we sat down, and, with the help of the information printed on one side of my little yellow ticket, found that we had each won the—to us—incredible sum of £3,400, for so hopeless are the chances against winning the *terno*, that the *lotto* gives you the odds of 4,250 to 1.

"It was some time before we got our winnings. The Italian Government is very reluctant about all payments, but eventually the whole sum came in, and Ronald and I were married.

"So you cannot wonder that I cherish the little yellow ticket as my greatest treasure. Nothing will ever persuade me but that the fairies were watching over me that night, and it was they who sent me my lucky dream."

A STRANGE BOOK.

MR. KEARY REPLIES TO MR. VIVIAN.

Mr. Peter Keary has written to Mr. Vivian: "You amaze and you perplex me. Incidentally you annoy me. Because I am lost on you. . . . You never know when you are well off. You exhaust yourself in killing a butterfly. You are like the playful kitten. You rush madly at nothing at all and stop before you get there, then to wonder why you went on such a tom-noddy expedition. The secret of success (please see my first book) is that the man or the kitten should accomplish something. Why did you rush at me so ruthlessly in John Bull last week without really worrying me on your own? Why did you so easily misunderstand and maltreat and misconstrue me, and leave it to others to dissect me?

"I sent John Bull a copy of my book, 'Get On or Get Out,' for *your* good—to interest and improve *you*, and you condemn me to be torn to pieces—possibly—on the rack of John Bull's humour. You cannot learn anything from it yourself. You say to your readers, 'Read this book two or three times and tell me what you think of it.' You must not review a book by its preface and its index. Who, do you think, is going to read this book three times for your benefit? Nobody ever would read any book three times.

"The world moves too slowly for you. You are too electric and too eclectic. I should like to sub-edit you. In my way, not yours. Otherwise I should always be afraid of the rich red Vivian blood making a horrid mess. And yet I can see you very clearly as a thin-visaged Winston Churchill or Campbell-Bannerman—a sort of skim milk Premier of to-day or to-morrow. I like the idea. Do you? You have the ability, or you are getting to it, but you require the ballast. I could teach you so much about 'slopping over.'

"I really wish you would read 'Get On or Get Out' once or twice more *yourself*—early in the morning—before breakfast—in bed; before the rush and the turmoil of the day comes on. And do it quickly and with reason. There is such a great deal in it meant for a man like you."

Mr. Vivian's Reply.

But I *have* read the book carefully, and, on closer acquaintance, I rather like it. Did I not make that clear? If our friend the Butterfly will look at my review again, I assure him he will find it full of honey.

Even my suggestion that "Get On or Get Out" should be read three times was not unkind. Mr. Keary thinks no one will do it. I think they may if I ask them, as I rarely advise that any book shall be read even once. And my request for criticism was prompted by curiosity, not laziness, for I had already taken my dose of hashish and desired to know how it would affect other constitutions.

JOHN BULL IN BUSINESS.

A book that combines all that general detailed business information the want of which leads to so much confusion in a busy office; together with concise summaries of such important subjects as book-keeping, banking, auditing, investing, speculating, etc., and all legal knowledge as it affects business, trades and money matters, may fairly claim to be a book that every practical man ought to have. Such a book is "The Business Encyclopædia," which is now supplied on such easy terms as bring its acquisition within the reach of every man who recognises his need of business efficiency. A reference to our advertising columns will enable the reader to learn more concerning these easy terms. Moreover, an admirably got-up little book is supplied free of charge by the publishers, which tells the enquirer all about the Business Encyclopædia. Over Thirty Thousand sets of this work have already been ordered, and there is no doubt that its general use will do much to relieve John Bull of the reproach that used to be so frequently levelled at him, namely, that he is too fond of "muddling through" in commerce as in other things, and that he lacks system and efficiency.

THE LONDON CUCKOO COUNCIL.

By Jim Crow.

[*We again desire to disown all responsibility for Mr. Crow's views—or his method of expressing them.*]

I am happy to think that this is not a political paper, for no political paper would allow me to say what I think about the London County Council. Talk about that effete collection of lunatics, lawyers, and reprobates, which, under the name of the House of Lords, is permitted, by a mouldy constitution, to flout the nation—they are angels of light, ministers of grace and paragons of all the perfections, compared to that abominable body, which has for so many years made London ridiculous.

Now, to show that I am not a party man, as some of John Bull's readers seem to fear, I raise my arms (not my eyes, like passive-resisting psalm-singers) to Heaven, and call a curse on both the houses. They are indeed houses of ill-fame. Not only the Moderates. Phœbus! what a name. Fancy solemnly stalking out to battle and calling yourself Moderate! A middle party, a central party, a non-party, an independent, I could understand. But a Moderate! It suggests at the outset procrastination, incompetence, drowsiness, uncertainty, futility, rotten doddering imbecility. If you have a vestige of a shred of a ghost of a principle lurking anywhere in your vile body, how in Heaven's name can you be *Moderate* when you have to put up your fists and defend it? No wonder it was necessary to change the name. But the change has been for the worse. Instead of miserable Moderates, we are now confronted by mouthing "Municipal Reformers." The very name suggests a tongue in a cheek, a leer, a nudge, an intention to cheat. And it comes so soon after the fœtid failure of the Protectionist to call himself a Tariff Reformer. Protectionist, like Moderate, suggested cowardice. The moderate man always seeks protection immediately there is a whisper of a row. And now both seek to prostitute the sacred name of reform, in the vain, ignominious hope that we shall all be foolish enough to fail to recognise that it means reaction. Tariff reform only means that the poor shall pay more for the necessaries of life. That is bad enough. But municipal reform means that they shall not merely be robbed, but that they shall be enslaved and ground down by the Trusts of unscrupulous monopolists.

So much for the Moderates, to establish my political impartiality. But what shall we say about the pretended "Progressists"? At their door lie all the frenzied finance, the roaring rates, the stupid steamboats, and all the other countless follies which have marked the reign of the London County Council.

The origin of that body was on this wise. Some wiseacres having decided (on very proper principles) that a great place like London ought to have Home Rule, govern itself, and give London to the Londoners, a Bill was passed and voters were invited to vote. But there had long existed a prejudice against "Bumbledom" and "the politics of the village pump." Anything beneath the High Court of Parliament had always been viewed in that light, and, while every Englishman still aspired to be a Member of Parliament, no one above the status of a rate-collector had any desire to join the London County Council. It is true that some pretentious persons simulated a desire, but that was only to confer a factitious importance to a body from which they hoped to derive some advantage. Lord Rosebery, for instance, took the Council up and damned it, as he very nearly did the Liberal Party. It became a preserve for thin-voiced, thin-lipped, schoolmasterly, donnish, acidulated faddists, such as haunt debating societies, deliver lectures (to which they give the meaningless name of *extension*), and sicken working-men with the whole game of party-politics. From their cradles they had vowed to themselves that they would become private secretaries to public personages, junior lords of the Treasury, in any case some kind of gentleman's gentleman, or perish in the attempt. They cared no more about London than they did about Timbuctoo, but they contrived to make the London County Council a stepping-stone to the representation of London constituencies in the House of Commons. This they did by a cynical abandonment of Liberal principles, by a reckless and cowardly subserviency to a handful of silly Socialists, who at least knew what they wanted, although that was impracticable and unattainable.

A few weeks still remain. Is it too late to gather together a few plain men who will articulate the obvious wishes of Londoners and stand for the two great principles of Liberty and Economy?

The longer a scandalous County Council endures, the more difficult it will be to overthrow. Arise now, therefore, or for ever hold your peace. Remember that even Sydney Webb was actually elected unopposed.

Are Disorders of the Stomach Curable?

Ask this question of a poor sufferer, who has experienced the agonies of Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Constipation, Flatulence, Diarrhœa, etc., who has been trying the various drug methods for years with only temporary relief, if any at all, and his despairing look will be sufficient confirmation of his belief. Ask the same question of one who has tried properly applied electricity, and he not only shows his enthusiasm in the expression of his features, but his words are those of praise and gratitude.

Anyone who has tried drugs knows that the more he doses himself the more miserable he becomes. He tries one medicine, which gives relief for a time, but it soon ceases to have any effect, and he tries another. And so it goes on. His poor weakened stomach is kept up by this artificial stimulation, and in time absolutely refuses to digest anything. He becomes constipated, with constant headaches, pains in the back and shoulders, drowsiness; loses all energy and interest in everything, except the torment of his trouble. He finally hears of the wonderful effect of electricity—tries it. His appetite soon improves; his bowels become regular; his pains disappear; he is full of energy and ambition, a living testimony to the established fact that Electricity is Life.

There is a method of infusing electricity into the body that will cure the most obstinate stomach complaint. It is a new, scientific method, which should be resorted to in all cases. It has secured the "Science Siftings" Certificate of Merit, and is endorsed by thousands who have tried it. It is the "Ajax" Dry-Cell Body Battery, an ideal electric appliance that is astounding the medical profession and shattering old theories. A book, fully describing it, and the treatment of disease generally by electricity, will be sent absolutely free to any reader of John Bull who writes for it. A postcard or a letter to the British Electric Institute (Dept. 41), 25 Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C., will bring it at once.

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39 Bishopsgate-Street Within, London, E.C.
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Deposits of £10 and upwards received as under:—
Subject to 3 months' notice of withdrawal 5 p.c. per ann.
" 6 " " " 6 "
" 12 " " " 7 "
Special terms for longer periods. Interest paid quarterly.
The Terminable Deposit Bonds pay nearly 9 per cent., and are a safe investment. Owing to the nature of our investments, we are able to pay rates of interest on deposits that will compare favourably with dividends paid on almost any class of stock or share-holding insuring the safety of capital. We have been established for 36 years, and our position in the banking world to-day testifies to the success of our business methods, and to the satisfaction of our customers. Write or call for prospectus.
A. WILLIAMS and H. J. TALL, Joint Managers.

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BULL'S EYES.

CONSEQUENCES:—A Saint.....met.....a Sinner.....on Sunday.....The Saint said, "This is a Day of Rest."..... The Sinner said, "Harmless recreation *is* rest."..... The consequence was.....the Saint was shocked.....And the world said, "Are the offertories falling off?"

.....

The Rev. R. J. Campbell.....met.....the public.....in a pulpit.....He said, "Hearken to the prophet."..... The P. said, "Whose profit?".....The consequence was.....the "New Theology."..... And the world said, "Rats!"

.....

The *Daily Mail*.....met.....the *Daily Express*.....in a music-hall. The *D.M.* said, "Seen my Zancigs?"..... The *D.E.* said, "Heard about my Retsils?"..... The consequence was.....a battle of "coddam."..... And the world said, "Sweet are the uses of Advertisement."

SOME UNFOUNDED RUMOURS:—

That when our printers make a mistake the editor says "Odham."

.....

That G.P.O. also means "Generously Paid Overtime."

.....

That people are saying the author of "Witty-Cur's Almanack" ought to be muzzled.

.....

That they are saying in Jamaica, "This is a rum country."

.....

That the Channel Tunnel being a menace to England, the Irish Members will support it.

.....

That the L.C.C. elections are more important than the Football Cup-ties.

.....

That "Better Late than Never" is to be inscribed on the Victoria Cross in future.

.....

That the proprietor of the *Express* thinks the next best thing to being a peer, is to be a Pearson.

.....

That the Zancigs' show is all cod(e).

.....

That it is necessary to "go to the dogs" to get a "Witty-Cur."

SOCIETY GOSSIP:—

The Archbishop of Canterbury has gone on a short visit to some friends in South America and Mexico.

.....

The Bishop of London has run across to the Holy Land, *vid* Paris and Bucharest.

.....

The Bishop of Bath and Wells has gone to Iceland for a little fishing.

.....

The Bishop of Exeter has left for New Zealand, for a brief holiday.

.....

The Bishop of Truro has just left for Japan, but will be home shortly.

A Mr. *Mc*Nathan is reported missing in Jamaica. We are anxiously waiting for news as to the fate of the *O'*Isaacs family.

"The New Chronicles of Don Q." is the title of a recent book. Does "Q." stand for "Quay"?

According to Captain Etti, criminal Chinese are being smuggled into this country disguised as laundrymen. The disguise seems to wash.

The *Lancet* says that cold mutton is unwholesome. But then, it is sheap.

A German Catholic priest has warned his flock that on admittance to heaven they will be asked if they voted on the side of the Pope. But what if they land in the other place?

"'Boom' in Rifle Clubs," reads a heading. Merely a "report," of course.

More trade, higher wages, and a smaller percentage of unemployed is the summary for the past year. No wonder Pearson's parrot has the pip.

The Rev. R. J. Campbell says, "It is next to impossible to get a fresh idea into the head of an expert." Is this why the "New Theology" is so old?

"Our carpets can't be beaten," advertises an upholsterer. Not so dusty.

The Yarmouth school children have saved £1,000 in pennies in less than a year, under a savings scheme. The L.C.C. should adopt it.

"There is a lot of life in good pork," said a witness in a recent case. And a lot of death in bad.

The *Daily News* refers to "Moderate mendacity." But is London really "broke"?

Lord Minto and the Amir have had a garden party, and they helped each other to—milk. It is rumoured that the guests had a bun and orange each at parting.

A man who threw a glass of beer in a policeman's face, admitted "he had made a mistake." Did he think the bobby's mouth was open?

Herr Dernburg, a German politician, has been presented with a white waistcoat made of marzipan. It should not only look "sweet," but be "grateful and comforting" to his "Little Mary."

The motor-car doth now remind us,
We can make our fellows fear.
And departing, leave behind us,
Poison in the atmosphere.

According to the markets, cheese has been "quiet." The bit brought us in a restaurant recently must have been bought some time ago; it was all we could do to keep it on the plate.

A baker at Clerkenwell County Court last week complained that the confectionery trade is diminishing. Can this be because we are giving away "biscuits"?

Canon Horsley states that in his own parish, containing 13,000 people, his is the only bath. We suggest as a text, "Wash and pray."

One man already has asked the Rev. Mr. Aked for the loan of £2,000,000, another for the loan of £500,000. Rather premature; they might have given him twelve months to get the money together.

An editor of a provincial paper was getting £1,000 a year, another paper offered him £1,250 a year to join their staff; his own people, when they heard of it, offered him £1,500 a year if he would stay. He went home, prayed for "Divine Guidance," and stayed.

MEMS. FOR GENTLEMEN CRICKETERS:—

Some Cricket Amateurs may not be gentlemen, but the Press say they are. Some of the Professionals are gentlemen, but the Press say they are not.

Should Lord Hawke invite any of the Yorkshire pros. to lunch—leave in a body.

Should a pro. enter your compartment when going to a match, get out.

When in running for a catch, should you collide with a pro., go immediately to the pavilion and change your shirt.

The Salvation Army are sending round collecting old clothes, books, etc., for their Social Colony and Homes. But they refuse to accept back numbers of JOHN BULL.

An American lady has sued the North German Lloyd Company for damages for sea-sickness "all the way from Bremen to New York." A lot of evidence will be brought up.

Rev. Stephen Barrass says, "Many are afraid of their religion; in fact, a number were even ashamed of it." Quite so; but it is rather emBarrassing to hear it from the pulpit.

An unemployed man committed suicide, leaving a note asking that "a nice new verdict" should be returned, "Want of Work." The jury returned "Temporary insanity." So the man who wants work is temporarily insane!

Mr. Swift MacNeil writes to a contemporary on "The Genesis of the Peerage." What we want to see is the exodus.

The Recorder at the Old Bailey has made a wonderful discovery—that a counsel took money to appear in a case, and neither turned up nor handed his brief to another. He says "it is a new thing" to him. *We* seem to have heard of it before.

It has been decided that a chauffeur is entitled to his uniform when leaving your service. You may, however, retain the car.

Somebody is advertising a cure for snoring. "Cure yourself in your own room." But we want to cure the other fellow.

In future, there are to be no Sunday concerts on Yarmouth Pier. The Broads are to be superseded by the Narrows.

There has been a deal of protest against Sir R. Littler's long sentences; and yet all who appear before him want Littler sentences.

The life of the widow of Russell Sage is said to be made miserable by the responsibility of giving away £2,000,000 in charity. We offer to relieve her of further trouble. She can have 80,000,000 copies of "Witty-Cur's Almanack"—all we have in stock at present.

From what we know of North Islington, we fancy the Moderate candidates for the L.C.C. do not stand much chance of election. Fancy putting up a Saint and a Dove!

The Noncon. Conscience is a funny thing. Fines amounting to £100 were inflicted on Ramsgate bookmakers, who had been watched by "a civilian in the pay of the police, who *induced* the bookies to open accounts with him"!

An undertaker having complained of bad trade, a County Court judge pointed out that population was increasing. That judge must be Irish.

"The First New Novel of 1907" is announced. It is called "The Sacrifice." We suppose it is the story of a politician who consents to accept office.

David Christie Murray has written "The Penniless Millionaire." No millionaire ought to carry pence about with him.

This being the bargain sales season, there is a strange absence of news respecting the suffragettes. Can it be that——?

If the Mico Training College at Kingston really was built at the Pisa-like angle represented in the photograph published in the *Daily News*, it's a wonder it waited for the earthquake before falling.

At the Clerkenwell County Court recently, the wife of a defendant described her husband as "a navvy's labourer." This reminds us of the man who, when charged with drunkenness, described himself as "a teetotaler's labourer," but explained to the magistrate that he had been on strike for the last month.

Many a man who remains late at the office "to balance his books," finds considerable difficulty in balancing himself on his way home.

Life's punctuation: Infancy, notes of admiration; Youth, interrogation; Manhood, dashes; Old Age, full stops.

A soliloquy is termed a monologue; a conversation between two persons, a dialogue. Should the feline midnight concert be called a catalogue.

An old lady charged at Enfield with drunkenness, attributed her downfall to reading novels late at night. She ought not to have tackled such dry ones.

"There is a taint of decadence in the art of all ages," says Professor Herkomer. Yes, our pavement artist says that the chalks he uses ain't quite what they used to was.

Colonel Andreieff, chief of the Gendarmerie at Lodz, has been shot dead. There's Lodz more in this than meets the eye.

We are bewitched, which is the witch, Nelly Neil, the new witch, or the Aldwych Edna May?

At Bandon, Co. Cork, the sheriff's men, while endeavouring to evict a tenant, had to abandon Bandon, owing to the band on the spot.

Germany is again worrying over its Diet. Sausages can't be very satisfying.

HAVE A NIP?

The guard stood on the footboard,
His lips were blue with cold,
His nose was blue—a record—
And his thoughts were blue, I'm told.

Inside the car a dandy
In happiest mood he saw,
Nipping his "Three Star" brandy,
And hope made the air less raw.

"Have a nip?" he queried, brightly,
"Thanks, thanks!" said the guard, half-dead;
Presenting his ticket politely—
"Then take it, of this," he said.

J. O. B. L.

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LARGEST SALE IN THE WORLD.

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Proves Superiority.

Lipton's Teas Excel All Others.

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LIPTON'S DELICIOUS TEAS

Direct from the Tea Gardens.

THE BEST. 1/9 THE BEST.

NO HIGHER PRICE.

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WONDERFUL VALUE. 1/6 A SPLENDID TEA.

BETTER THAN OTHERS' "BEST."

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Buy from the Growers,

LIPTON, LTD.,

TEA PLANTERS, CEYLON.

BRANCHES AND AGENCIES EVERYWHERE.

JOHN BULL'S LETTER BAG.

[JOHN BULL *replies to some of his numerous correspondents.*]

MRS. A. B. (Newbury) sends "The Song of the Blouse," and we cannot refrain from quoting the last verse:—

"If every lady in the land,
Whose carriage takes her down the Strand,
Would rescue *one* frail smouldering brand—
Would take *one* poor city girl by the hand,
The Lord would say 'Well done!'"

MRS. A. B. must really contribute to next year's Witty-Cur.

MRS. L. P. (Stamford Hill).—About 333 other people found Jim Crow out, so you may tell it in Gath and publish it in the streets of Askalon, if you happen to be there. Did you really mean to set your Brahmo watch by Witty-Cur's Almanack?

C. J. W. P. (Wrexham) thanks us for bringing happiness and joy to his town. He says, "After devouring each word, our leading citizens, hitherto notable for their lugubrious expression, are transfigured with contortions of their facial charms. At our debating class you will hear Witty-Cur and JOHN BULL quoted more often that C.-B. or A.B4. There are rumours of a law-suit owing to a misunderstanding between our leading newsagent and the Town Shark. The N.A. tried to palm off Whitaker as a better article. Blows followed, and our N.A. is resting. I feel sure, if Witty-Cur or yourself should come to Wrexham, I could almost guarantee the freedom of the city and an illuminated address, with, of course, a banquet, including Wrexham Lager Beer. All the swells here drink it." Unfortunately, Witty-Cur is a teetotumer.

"CONFUCIUS" (Norwich) writes: "You are the 20th century teacher and reformer of modern journalism. The intellectual banquet that you serve us every week is in every way worthy of the gods. Socrates, Demosthenes, and even the immortal Plato in silence doff their hats to you. The great British nation hold you in their hands with delighted astonishment, wondering whether you are a messenger from Mars." Next, please.

"A READER" (Matlock).—£100,000 divided by 20,000 equals £5—not £5,000. You must look up your arithmetic.

F. O. J. (Belfast).—Send us something more original than the old story about the members of the Corporation putting their heads together and producing a wood pavement. This was one of the jokes with which Adam and Eve used to while away the long evenings.

"CELT" (Cardiff).—Thanks for cutting.

E. C. N. (Tottenham).—We agree that the practice is reprehensible, but surely the payments are optional. We will look up the new Prevention of Corruption Act and see whether it applies.

C. O. H. (Birmingham).—Dot and carry one. Did you expect Witty-Cur to be bothered with dates? You are such arithmeticians in Birmingham.

E. J. S. (Clerkenwell).—Last time you said you disapproved. We thought that meant "No larks."

"READER OF JOHN BULL" (Kingston).—Don't take any notice of that silly yellow press. "Door" must have meant "dome." And even then!

"RYDE" wants to know "if there is any money in professional lecturing on learned subjects." We think not. The less lecturers know, the more they can make. Who wants to be lectured?

"NIGHT NURSE" (Birmingham).—There should be some stalwarts within call. If it is all wrong, what do you propose?

"ONE OF OUR SONS" (Crouch Hill) does not care for the humour of the Southwark County Court judge, and says "he would be more in his element on the platform of a tenth-rate booth at a country fair, standing on his head and grinning through a horse-collar." But our son considers us the best cure for the blues, "and as for Witty-Cur—well there!" Evidently there is no accounting for tastes.

W. H. B. (Shrewsbury) is "awfully pleased" with the Almanack, "as it is a story from beginning to end." Yes, it is all—stories.

F. L. B. (Blackburn).—Thanks for compliments and funny anecdotes.

A. S. (Battersea).—Yes, it is absurd.

FATHEAD BUX SING (Goosberybad) says "I am poor fool Hindu man, and found much learning in Mr. Jim Crow, Esq."

J. B. (Brook Green) sends a cutting from the *Daily Express*, which said, "Far be it from us to be pessimistic, but facts are facts, and we feel we ought to warn the public that there is no support beneath the earth to prevent it falling." We will insure our lives at once.

J. O'N. (Cardiff).—Ten shillings a week is certainly not much for "a very useful person," when the chief constable has a £50 carpet in his office. Wastrels are usually generous in everything but wages.

"PHOTOGRAPH" (Sandgate) visited the "Yankee Studio" (High Street, Folkestone), which took "people's photos and their money," but would neither deliver photos nor return money. He says the firm has now removed to High Street, Tunbridge Wells, and would like to know if anyone has complained there? Perhaps there is an explanation.

"A CONSTANT READER" draws our attention to the advertisement of a barmaid, whose address is "War Office, Whitehall."

J. T. (Wandsworth Common) used to read *John Bull and Britannia* in the early fifties, but found it too high and dry. He finds us far more refreshing.

F. H. M. (Notting Hill) sends us a "Young Moore's Almanack," which appeared in 1903 for the seventh year of publication. It was intended to advertise a chemist's shop, and did not indulge in jests like the "Young Moore" we noticed recently.

"AUTO" (Birmingham).—Thanks for letter. Have forwarded specimen copies as suggested.

A. A. (Stoke Newington) says that for three years he has had a collecting box for the "Poor Children's Society" (of Shaftesbury Hall, Trinity Street, Borough) on his counter, but a customer has told him that our contemporary, *Truth*, has been warning people against them. A. A. is correctly informed, and we should advise him to collect for a worthier object—there are many.

"RAFFLING" (Malton) sends us two newspaper cuttings relating to the discovery of the dead body of a schoolmaster. In one case the corpse is said to have been discovered by boys from the school, and in the other it is stated that at this time the boys had not returned from the Christmas vacation. There is, however, nothing necessarily inconsistent in this, as some of the boys may have been unfortunate enough to have been left there during the holidays as boarders. Our correspondent had a great shock on reading that the deceased was headmaster, but such turns out not to have been the case, the unfortunate gentleman being an assistant master.

P. M. (Dublin) wants to purchase a book giving the population, valuation, debt, and other various information in connection with British municipalities. There is probably a Blue-book giving these details, and "P. M." should write Messrs. Wyman and Sons, Fetter Lane, London, E.C., enquiring whether this is the case, and if so, asking the price. If there is no such official publication, one ought to be put in hand at once—it would probably then be ready for the L.C.C. election after next!

H. S. (Barnsley).—Take no notice of irresponsible chatter.

T. H. (West Green) sends us an advertisement of the International Securities Syndicate, from the *Daily Mail*. We have before expressed our opinion that it is unfair of the proprietors to handicap their new City Editor by inserting advertisements of this description.

"VENEZUELA" (Basingstoke) has a friend who whilst in Caracas became acquainted with a "recipe for making a skin lotion" used by a few Spanish ladies in that city. He wishes to find someone who will join him in introducing it to the public. Now then, who speaks first?

"ONE WHO KNOWS" contradicts "F. A. R.'s" recent statement that Lyons are in the habit of burning their stale bread and cakes. He says, "the stale bread is collected by the Sisters of Nazareth, who call once a week for it." Why keep it a week? The cakes, we are told, are got rid of "below tariff prices." More dumping!

"A VICTIM (ONLY ONCE)" gives another version. He says that, "speaking as a daily user of the cafés," he should say that Messrs. Lyons are far too economical for what was alleged. The explanation as to the use of stale bread and cake is? "*Summer*, Victoria Pudding, 3d. per portion; *Winter*, Bread and Butter Pudding, 3d. per portion, from year's end to year's end."

ONE OR TWO APPLESHAW READERS write in reference to our comments upon the case in which the Rev. Mr. Le Froy was concerned. We do not, however, propose dealing further with the matter—which appears to us to be one for settlement between that gentleman and his own parishioners.

C. J. M. (Islington).—Your suggestion shall be considered.

E. W. C. (Northumberland).—The reason we boomed *Witty-Cur's Almanack* was, partly because we wished to please "Jim Crow," and partly because he paid for the advertisements.

C. F. A. (Peckham).—Who takes any notice of what the young man of the *Pall Mall Gazette* says?

T. C. (Freshwater).—Why do you charge us with being "father to Jim Crow"? Were it so, we would have drowned him when he was a small pup.

J. C. (Birmingham) thought the Harmsworth people were such strong Fiscal Reformers, but on purchasing a case for binding one of their publications he is startled to find it is "made in Holland." It seems scarcely the cheese.

"A COMMON POTBOY" (Barnsbury) posted a registered letter years ago, but has reason to believe it was never delivered to the proper person. He should forward his receipt to the Postmaster-General, and ask for an inquiry, giving the grounds of his suspicion. We are afraid, however, he may be out of date, as the original acknowledgment of delivery may have been destroyed.

G. G. (Benton, N.C.) suggests that Bile Beans's new product, "Peps," is an abbreviation of "*Pinelyptus*," a well-known and old-established preparation. If "Peps" is made of nothing worse, we do not mind.

C. W. B. (Bristol), "although a Tory and a son of a Tory," is delighted with JOHN BULL, and has gradually come round to the view that our political allusions are "worth thinking over and are written without undue bias." We are delighted to hear it, and trust that C. W. B. will continue to make satisfactory progress.

W. B. I. (Aughton).—Thanks for information, which we will use.

W. T. (Hackney) complains bitterly that it is impossible for subscribers to the Harmsworth Encyclopædia to obtain the necessary index unless they purchase covers from Carmelite House or have the volumes bound by the Harmsworth firm. He also makes other complaints in reference to the work generally, but we have sufficiently dealt with the matter in a previous issue. W. T. has our sympathy.

A. M. (Old Kent Road) congratulates us on the result of our efforts for Mr. Hugh Watt, and adds his testimony to the good quality of watches supplied by Ingersoll and Brother.

T. C. B. (Shepherd's Bush) calls our attention to an advertisement offering permanent appointments at good salaries to men over 21 "wishing to be inspectors of weights and measures." Applications are to be sent to "Inspector of Weights and Measures, Oakham, Rutland." T. C. B. asks how it comes about that a Government official is permitted to insert an advertisement of this kind. We expect it will be found on inquiry that the advertiser has long ceased to hold any Government appointment. We seem to remember having seen this advertisement for many years past.

A. V. (Islington Green) calls our attention to what he describes as a "howler" in the *Crown* of December 8th, in which it is stated that Marie Antoinette and Madame Du Barry rivalled each other in gloves "at the time of the Restoration." We think, however, it would be a charitable view to assume that "Restoration" was a printer's error for "Revolution."

W. H. (London) calls our attention to two sentences, each of ten years' penal servitude, recently passed by Mr. Justice Phillimore. We do not, however, think that they are the best examples that could be chosen of this particular Judge's methods.

C. H. P. (Nottingham).—Thanks for cutting, but scarcely merits a biscuit.

T. H. A. R. (Shepherd's Bush) is "one of hundreds of assistant postmen awaiting appointments to the established staff," and complains strongly of the delay in being placed upon the staff, mentioning an instance of an ex-soldier with only ten months' service being appointed, whilst an ex-telegraph messenger with five and a half years' service was passed over. He also complains that by the terms of their engagement assistant postmen are compelled to work overtime whenever called upon to do so, which prevents their obtaining additional employment. We will look into the matter.

F. F. (Croydon) tells us that in a hairdresser's shop down there is the following notice:—"Hair Cutting and Shaving whilst you wait." Evidently a subtle device of this particular barber to draw attention to his place.

C. H. S.—Thanks for cutting. The *Weekly Times and Echo* is not owned by Lord Northcliffe.

THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF WEIDHAAS HYGIENIC INSTITUTE, Burgess Hill, sends us a lot of literature relating to that establishment, not the least interesting portion of which is a commendation by the late George Jacob Holyoake, who appears to have been an inmate. That says a great deal for it.

"INTERESTED" (Southsea).—We are not at present reprinting our Salvation Army articles.

"ACCOUNTANT" (Wood Green) writes testifying to the efficacy of Dr. Tucker's Specific for asthma, and gives us the address as "Onoway," Half Moon Lane, Herne Hill. We know nothing as to its merits, but from what we gather it does not seem to belong to the quack order.

T. W. T. (Heckmondwike) tells us that our recent reference to the Rev. Riley, the fanatical Hackney parson, was read with great interest up there, as Riley used to be a pastor in the district, but "through his fanaticism he disgusted almost every member of his congregation, and pressure was brought to bear by the deacons and other officials, with the result that he resigned." Although he was "given a testimonial by a few rabid teetotalers who were not members of his congregation, he left Heckmondwike without any expression of sorrow from the congregation which he had thoroughly disgusted." We can quite understand it.

"HUMANITY" (Leeds).—Thanks for letter. We cannot, however, spare one of our biscuits for everybody.

H. G. D. (Wanstead).—We appreciate your suggestions. All in good time.

"CAROLUS". (Kidderminster).—We know nothing about the Incorporated Society of Musicians, but it sounds a very respectable affair.

A. G. C. (Mafeking) tells us we are going strong, even "in the heart of Central Africa." This certainly makes us inclined to maffick.

H. R. (Spithead) thinks we are a bit hard on the *Daily Mail* and also on the Conservatives. We will try in future to be a bit softer in dealing with both these subjects.

"NEW READER" (Coventry) asks whether the Keith-Harvey treatment really makes hair grow. We have heard that it sometimes makes it stand on end!

H. J. D. (London) calls our attention to the crowding of one of the leading music-halls. "The house," he says, "is packed from floor to ceiling, every available seat being taken, and the gangways on both sides are practically filled with people standing." He trembles to think what would happen in the event of an alarm of fire. We commend the matter to the attention of the management.

W. C. (Pendleton).—Never mind what the *Manchester Evening News* says—stand by JOHN BULL.

HOW TO LIVE TO BE ONE HUNDRED.

Much has been written in an endeavour to show how one may live to reach 100 years of age, but the consensus of opinion both of health experts and our leading medical men is that this age can only be reached by a person who, in the first instance, has a perfect constitution and who does not impair vitality and staminal power by any unnatural mode of living. To reach this age, one must, in a word, follow nature. The first law of nature is *exercise*. Beyond this one must pay attention to diet, baths, bathing, sleep. One must have regular hours, avoid worry, and get plenty of fresh air. All the above points and many others relating to health culture, exercise, and hygienic living are fully explained in a most interesting booklet, entitled "Health at Home," published by Mr. Thomas Inch, Room 19, The Broadway, Fulham, London, S.W. Any reader mentioning JOHN BULL will immediately receive a copy and terms of treatment. If but one year be added to one's span of life through Professor Inch's course, it must be considered that the nominal fee asked is a most profitable and desirable investment. Every reader is earnestly recommended to get in touch with Professor Inch at once.

"John Bull" wears Swan & Edgar's Pyjamas.

Ceylon Wool.
3 for 20/-, post free.
Sample 6/11, post. 3d.

Heavy Pure Wool.
3 for 36/-, post free.
Sample 12/6, post. 3d.

All Silk.
3 for 54/-, post free.
Sample 18/6, post. 3d.

Swan & Edgar, Ltd.,
Piccadilly & Regent St., W.

Constant Coughing
Destroys the Tissues of the Lungs
and makes them sore and weak.

VENO'S LIGHTNING COUGH CURE immediately subdues a cold, however severe, eases a cough instantly, and heals the mucus surface of the breathing passages. It soothes the inflamed membrane, and eradicates the catarrhal mucus, and in so doing, takes the soreness out of the throat and chest. Its delightful balsamic properties are most gratifying. Nothing could be better and safer for children's coughs, and to the sufferer from chronic chest diseases it is a complete revelation. Relief comes instantly, and a permanent cure follows.

MRS. WESLEY, PETTY COTTINGHAM, HARROGATE, writes—VENO'S LIGHTNING COUGH CURE should be in every household. I have always had it available for several years past. I have never known it to fail. It acts like magic; it is rightly named "THE LIGHTNING COUGH CURE." It deserves to be known everywhere. To try it once is to prize it always.

ASK FOR
VENO'S LIGHTNING COUGH CURE

The purest and most efficient Remedy procurable for
Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, Asthma, Catarrh, Weak Lungs & Children's Coughs.
9½d., 1/1½ and 2/9 per bottle.
At all Chemists and Drug Stores everywhere.

S. A. (Walton-on-the-Naze) asks us to award one of our world-renowned biscuits to the editor of a local paper, from which he sends us a cutting containing the report of a charge against an old man of stealing a cab, in which it is stated that "the case had been partly heard *three years ago*, but had been adjourned to give the defendant the opportunity of calling witnesses." Suppose it had? It is very difficult to get evidence when you've no money to pay for it. Oh—a printer's error, was it?

W. T. C. (London) says that our recent reference to the luxurious appointments of the Paddington Town Hall were reprinted and widely circulated during the late elections, and that the matter of the Turkey carpets is still warming the souls (careful, Mr. Printer, not "soles") of some of the economists. There is also a difficulty about allowing the use of the Town Hall for public meetings. Under the new regulations, we understand that only persons in evening dress and their dancing shoes will be admitted.

H. A. R. (Leeds).—The matter is one for your local member of Parliament. Place it before him.

EX-INSPECTOR MCCARTHY (F Division) asks us to take up the case of his dismissal from the force in January, 1904, after 22 years' service. McCarthy was dismissed for accepting bribes—the charge, he says, resting upon the uncorroborated statement of a street bookmaker. He now demands that he be prosecuted for the offence, or else that the bookmaker be prosecuted for bribing him. This seems to us to be a reasonable request—especially as the dismissal involves the loss of pay and pension. What says the Home Secretary?

H. C. (East Ham) thinks that Judge Shortt was short of all sense of humour when he objected to being addressed in such a short manner as "My dear Sir." And he asks whether we would like to receive similar paragraphs!

J. R. (Bradford) wants to "sell up a pup." He sends us an alleged newspaper cutting in the shape of an advertisement of a terrier puppy for sale; it will "eat anything," and, of course, is "fond of children." That advertisement originally appeared in the *Garden of Eden News*.

C. F. A. (Peckham).—You evidently have a poetic imagination, but we do not quite follow you.

"Æ. R. I. FISHER."—Your 2d. appears to have been omitted. Hurry back and pay up.

"ENQUIRER" (Nottingham).—Pennies of 1864 are worth just the same as other pennies.

L. A. B. (Battersea Park Road). We do not share your view of "John Bull," but are glad that you like *us*.

H. F. (Clapham Junction) points out that Paynter still advertises in the *Daily Express* as "Manager, 78, Mysore Road, Clapham." Thanks.

J. T. (Leeds) wants a 2d. copy of JOHN BULL. Here is a 6d. one for a penny.

J. D. J. (Wrexham) sends some ugly-looking advertisements for our collection. The conviction of the Editor of *Judy* should act as a warning.

G. N. B. (Clapham Common).—Thanks for letter.

"A SUBSIDER" (Maidstone).—Your cur was witty. We hope he liked it.

A. E. E. (Watford).—Too bad of your newsagent to send you "Whitaker." Try again.

H. W. L. (West Orange, N.Z.).—Glad to hear we buck you up there, and hope we keep your friends cool at Singapore. We enjoy those long journeys.

"BULLITE" (Kenilworth).—Thanks for your pat of best Dorset. Your friend can sue in his local county-court, and we hope he will get back his crown.

H. V. L. W. (Bristol) has fallen into the hands of an unscrupulous Holland firm working bogus competitions. We are sorry we can be of no use to him. We have already advised those of our readers who must have a flutter of this kind to avail themselves of the *Football Chat* competitions, under the direction of Mr. Charles Windust.

W. S. (London) thinks Dr. Torrey's attack upon Payne and Ingersoll was more in the nature of a challenge than a slander. We are fraid W. S. is not conversant with the facts.

W. E. J. (Harlington) would like us to show up the evils of the living-in system. Surely everybody is aware of them by this time.

N. B. (Anerley) would like to be referred to a good book on the subject of "Women's Work in the Professional and Public World." Can any of our readers suggest one?

J. E. T. (Port Talbot) writes all the way from Australia for information in reference to the Clease treatment and also wishes to know whether paraffin lotion is good for the hair, and, further, where a good hair specialist resides. We can only refer J. E. T. to our issue of September 22nd, containing full particulars of Mr. Clease's methods, but as regards the paraffin treatment we think our esteemed colleague, "Dagonet," of the *Referee*, the inventor of "Tatcho," is a better authority than ourselves. Not having had occasion up to the present to utilise the services of a hair specialist, we can only suggest that J. E. T. should communicate with one or other of those firms who advertise from time to time in our columns.

F. H. (Sheffield), who says he cannot afford many books—being only a navvy—takes two copies of JOHN BULL each week, as we "and good old *Reynolds* are *the* thing." He writes a long and intelligent letter, full of observation and criticism. He certainly need not be ashamed of his calling. John Ward, M.P., is also "only a navvy," but there are few Members more respected or more useful.

F. E. tells us that he was disturbed in his bed the other night by one of our enthusiastic canvassers, who handed him the following cryptic message:—

U. R. Requested
2 BUY JOHN BULL,
1d. EVERY SATURDAY
From Your
Newsagent.

F. E. appreciates both the paper and the energy of our canvasser, but as he has to be at work at 5 a.m., he did not appreciate this nocturnal visit.

P. G. (Norwich) suggests that we should devote a column weekly to an Employment Bureau, but, being a cautious man, stipulates that no charge should be made. We are afraid, under the circumstances, many columns would be required.

H. D. (Wood Green) cannot quite gather from newspapers the real position in reference to the present ecclesiastical crisis in France. We are afraid that, as the general Press has dealt so fully with the matter, we cannot find space to go into it.

J. P. (Glamorgan).—We quite agree with you that the Salvation Army does a large amount of good, and we should be sorry to have it thought that we ever disputed such a proposition. The whole object of our criticism has been to strengthen rather than weaken General Booth's great organisation.

W. D. (Savoy Hotel) scolds us for our reference to Mr. Chamberlain's health, and asks whether we do not know that "a few sympathetic remarks to a patient helps to alleviate his sufferings, whilst an article written in such language as we have seen fit to employ can only increase the pain and inflame the mind." W. D., however, forgets that the right hon. gentleman is unable to read.

G. E. L. (London) wrote to Gamage's for one of their catalogues. A little later, to his surprise, he received one of those "esteemed friend" communications from the Brahmo Lever Watch Company, with his signature attached. He believes it was taken from the postcard he wrote to Gamage's. If so, we are sure Mr. Gamage is no party to the means by which the Brahmo people get hold of these names, and he will certainly not be pleased to hear that they say "you were introduced to us by a friend."

"EBOR" (Birmingham).—Many thanks for cutting, which you will notice we have made the basis of a paragraph.

"DANUBE RIVER" (Reading).—The institution you refer to is the Royal School of Commerce and Journalism, 97, New Bond Street, London, W.

D. G. B. (Cardiff).—The paper you mention is, we believe, either dead or incorporated with some other publication.

J. E. C. (Oswestry).—As old shorthand writers ourselves, we are able to say that a system to be learnt in four lessons would be of little utility when acquired. The outlines in the specimen you send us are both far too long and too difficult to form. You cannot do better than learn Pitman's. Their latest book, presenting the system in the way it is taught in America, should meet your requirements.

J. W. H. (Swansea).—Yes, we think the "Business Encyclopædia and Legal Adviser" a useful publication

"FIRST SUBSCRIBER" (Catford).—We have already expressed a very strong and unfavourable opinion of the *Mint* (Great Sutton Street, London) and its concerns. Have nothing to do with it.

"DISGUSTED MAN" (Manor Park) has been reading some correspondence in the *Weekly Dispatch* on the "Demoralisation of Man." He does not, however, think that all the "demoralisation" is on the part of one sex, and in support of his theory sends us a long letter he has received from an adventuro is young lady after four weeks' acquaintance. He has certainly had the decency to cut off the lady's address, but altogether we are not impressed with his argument. The lady seems to be a very decent sort and we were almost ourselves tempted to keep the appointment she made.

£50
TO
£10,000
TO
LEND
PRIVATELY.

ON APPROVED NOTE OF HAND, without security or surety for short or long periods in town or country. Repayments to suit convenience. No enquiry fees. Strictest privacy. Advances on second mortgages. Bills discounted.
Messrs. FIELDINGS,
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LONDON, W.C.

BIRKBECK BANK.
Established 1851.
SOUTHAMPTON BUILDINGS, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.
2½ PER CENT. INTEREST
allowed on Deposit Accounts.
2 PER CENT. INTEREST
on Drawing Accounts with Cheque Book.
All general Banking Business transacted.
ALMANACK, with full particulars, POST FREE.
C. F. RAVENSCROFT, Secretary.

RACING NOTES.

By W. LOTINGA.
("Larry Lynx" of "The People.")

It's an "Ad."

How owners of sires do try to follow, or recall, the name in the nomenclature of their progeny!

Who Do I Mean?

When a good man dies, how invariably it is that his successor, who endeavours to take his name and connection, is a "rotter."

The Usual Meaningless and Useless Saying.

"Our horses competing at the meeting will leave in the morning if wanted" is a pretty frequent report from a training centre, but of no "earthly use" to backers.

Usage.

You can become accustomed to anything, so that bookmakers who would lay a horse to thousands, simply quake if they back one for a "tenner."

Hereditary Sporting Taste.

The father of Messrs. F. and H. Hardy, the popular owners, was in his day a very strong supporter of pedestrianism, especially in and around Manchester.

For the Good of Sport.

Would it not be an advisable plan to occasionally change the stewards of a race meeting, and not to have invariably the same three or four, who are either absentees, interested in the meeting, or professional backers?

Southern States "Cracks."

Geisha, a chestnut filly by Stilletto—Aquita, is the best of her sex in South America, and Melgarejo, a son of Mimi, the best of the colts.

How many backers ever know, or try to know, before the end of the week how they are going? In contrast the bookmakers total up after every race, and can tell to half a sovereign what they have lost or won upon each event, or in total upon the whole day or week.

The Birch Fund.

There is—and there can be for some weeks yet—no possible substitution of any other term than the word "stationary" as regards the unfortunate jockey's physical condition. He can never recover, but will linger on for weeks—even months. I am pleased to be able to say that my fund—first mooted in this column—now approximates £1,300, towards which I have recently had generous contributions from many of the leading patrons of racing. Before closing it I shall hope to make the amount £2,000, and if the liberal examples of Mr. Bower-Ismay, W. T. Robinson, the Earl of Coventry, Sir Samuel Scott, Lord Hamilton of Dalzell, Lord Rosebery, Sir Robert Wilmott, Lord Hugh Grosvenor, Lord Denman, Lord Essex, Mr. George Edwardes, Mr. Barclay Walker, Mr. J. S. Morrison, Mr. L. W. Winans, Mr. W. H. Schwind, and very many more, are followed there can be no doubt of the result. I can very truthfully say that my complete list, as set out in the *People*, contains the names of practically everybody who goes racing during the winter, or whom I am at all able to reach.

A Metropolitan Round.

During the present period a portion of last week, and four days again of next, is what may be termed "London racing" in vogue. It is a perfect plethora of Metropolitan suburban sport, which is very convenient to the great majority, although, maybe, surfeiting to some, and therefore a trifle antagonistic to the advantages of the attendances at each meeting. But for Nottingham's intrusion next Monday and Tuesday, and the one day abandoned through fog at Hurst Park, there would really be twelve consecutive days' racing held at various neighbouring venues, all of which are classed as London meetings.

An Undeniable Stamp.

Walking round the Hurst Park paddock was a horse utterly unknown, but of whom one could not help exclaiming "That's one of Cannon's." It is rare indeed that the Danebury stable are now represented at jumping, while of course the clothing, known to the majority of regulars, provided identification. But even without this there could be no mistaking the stamp and the "trimming up" of Bread Board, upon whom in the Novices' Steeplechase Charlie Cannon, the erstwhile flat race jockey, had his first steeplechase ride. There was something so unmistakable in the make and shape of the big powerful horse himself—and the manner in which he has been "trimmed," as to immediately suggest Amphidamos and endless others, who have in their day carried the popular scarlet and white hoops. It is so in a great many cases that immediately one sees a horse they can identify him as "one of Jennings'," "a Rothschild representative," "one of Lord Howard de Walden's," etc. The clothing, of course, accustoms one to more immediate identification, although there is always in horses, even of utterly different character, a certain indescribable stamp portraying their ownership or their stable.

The Crack Jumping Recruit.

Hartigan's stable, sheltering most, if not all, of the best of the new hands at the game, must have the very satisfying knowledge as to "what is what." But on actual public form the 70 sovs. Dafila is seemingly better even than the 1,000 guineas Round Dance and anything else that has yet carried silk. Dafila was so moderate on the flat that he could not win a race, the exception being a lucky walk-over gained at Manchester. His nearest was a second under bottom weight in a selling handicap at Kempton. He is not a big one and decidedly a very mean, common animal, who would never be judged to have any latent merit, particularly for carrying big weights two miles over hurdles. But he is, as yet, undefeated, and clearly able to produce at the end of two miles the same extraordinary electric spurt that had each time previously won him his races among those of his own age just cleverly and in exactly similar fashion. That the young horse could beat such a tried performer and an especially bloodlike horse as Baron Crafton at even weights seemed ridiculous, but Hartigan's representative carried his 11st. 10lb. home very easily with the other—mayhap none too lucky in running—only a bad third. Thre is just a chance of Dafila meeting the other crack performer this winter—the extraordinarily improved Wild Aster—in to-day's (Thursday's) Athens Plate at Windsor. What a race, and what a draw this would be, but I should vote emphatically for the young 'un at a difference of 1st. 11lb.

Official Officials.

It is becoming quite the fashion to appoint among the paid executives of race meetings men who are officials in another sense by holding licenses under Jockey Club law. Mr. Arthur Coventry, for instance, who is the official Jockey Club starter, is the Club Secretary at Hurst Park, where, moreover, the new clerk of the course is Mr. Hugh Owen, who has only just renounced his similar berth of being official starter to pose as an owner of several useful horses. Hurst Park has its duly appointed surgeon and veterinary surgeon—as should be the case—while they also claim an honorary veterinary surgeon. Only one thing is lacking—here and everywhere—the appointment of stipendiary stewards.

A Meeting's Fate.

By degrees tradition, upheld by fact, allocates a certain character to every meeting, with which in turn we learn to associate good or bad weather, hard or boggy going, huge fields or poor sport. Weatherwise, for instance, who does not know of "lucky Sandown," with its invariable "Queen's weather," especially in the summer time, and for its big gates! The contrast is shown at Hurst Park, where the executive have had to fight against every unfortunate phase of fate in a weather sense. Originally the meeting was so absolutely dogged by wretched and wet weather that at its outset the place was so unsuccessful that its £1 shares could have been bought for 5s. It only accentuates the praiseworthy hard work of those conducting the meeting and its undeniable claims upon public recognition when *malgré* EVERYTHING these same 20s. shares are worth £2 12s. 6d. in the market, and have for years now yielded a regular steady substantial dividend. If there was to be an unlucky meeting this winter it would naturally be Hurst Park, where, owing to an almost instantly-created fog, the first day's programme had to be abandoned. And as a natural sequence after the inconveniences of the first day's attempt to be present, and the uncertainty of sport on the Saturday, the second afternoon, too, was utterly spoiled. Nothing is worse to mar racing than fog, concerning which it was the boast of Manchester that they could overcome EVERYTHING excepting the vapoury fiend. Against frost or snow the going on a racecourse can be protected, but fog obliterates every

precaution, and there is truly a mammoth fortune awaiting the discoverer of something that will dispel—even temporarily and locally—these impenetrable mists. Fog, too, plays terrible havoc with everything connected with racing, delays trains, disjoints every intended connection, and, worse than all, puts the stewards of a meeting upon tenter hooks. It lifts, or drifts, as rapidly as it appears, and therefore it is impossible to give a positive decision as to whether racing is practicable or not until the very last moment. Oftentimes there have been cases when to study the public and the racing forces concerned, a somewhat premature decision has been given, only to find that the fog instantly dispels, so that sport could have been possible. Its prevalence on Saturday led to a lot of chaff, especially during running. Nothing, of course, could be seen of the competitors until they were half way home from the last obstacle, so that their absence from vision seemed an interminable time. Thereupon the wags—who seem to be well represented in all racecourse attendances—raised various numerous cries as to their being "all down," or that it was "no race." To those, and they would be many, who were backing losers, it was not an exhilarating experience, while those who betted odds on Domino—and never saw the horse—would have good cause for exclaiming that racing in a fog is not a good game. It is always satisfactory, even if one is losing their money, to mark and observe with one's own vision its gradual dissipation.

A Feather in the Hurst Cap.

The postponement or abandonment of a day's racing means an enormous amount in money, annoyance and the general upsetting of everyone's arrangements. It is one of the real misfortunes attendant upon the steeplechase season. It cuts down the already too numerous jockeys' few rides, causes the already well-fleeced owners to be still further mulcted in heavy charges, and to the actual working staff at a meeting is a very serious matter. The Hurst Park management, however, were gracious enough last week-end to pay every one of their employees the full two days' wages, which act of consideration is well worthy of public recognition.

Prophetic.

Kempton provides the best jumping programme of the present winter, when the competition for the Middlesex Hurdle Race will be a rare attraction. Cinders is the "form" horse to beat, but surely Hartigan has a line, and Rosrath Dawn should beat the lot. What would he do with them on the flat? Baron Crafton, Lord Cork, and especially Royal Rouge should win their races.

MESSRS. PRATT AND CO. AND GATWICK.

We have received the following letter from Messrs. Pratt and Co.:—

Sir,—We are fully aware that public officials should be subject to criticism, and we believe in the freedom of the Press. We are also averse to bringing ourselves into hostility with any newspaper, but we must really ask you to insert in a conspicuous place, under your sporting notes, the following statement:—

We have never published any bogus or misleading list of arrivals for any of our race meetings. In fact, we have never had the slightest connection with the issuing of any list of arrivals, nor any association whatever with those who compile such lists.

As to the alleged deterioration of Gatwick races, we can state positively that the receipts on the last day's racing were considerably more than those of a year ago, and the dividend for 1906 was 1½ per cent. higher than that for 1905. The class of owners entering for the principal races of 1907 is also of a higher standard than in any year since the meeting commenced.

With these statements we leave the public to judge for themselves as to the justification of the attacks made upon us by your contributor, and as to whether they were written solely in the public interest or actuated by any personal motive.

Yours faithfully,

Pratt and Co.

I am pleased to insert the above letter, being anxious at all times for fair play. I am quite prepared, equally with the writers of the letter, to leave my motives to the judgment of the public. I am also prepared to accept full personal responsibility for everything I write. I quite accept the assurance of Messrs. Pratt that they are not *themselves* responsible for the publication of lists of arrivals, probable runners, etc., but the practice to which I referred has been going on for so many years that they must surely have been aware of it, and I find it difficult to believe that it is out of their power to, at any rate, modify the evil. At their last meeting, for instance, of the horses alleged to be on the spot to run, more than one-half were absentees.

As regards the paltry increase in the dividend, I would point out that Kempton Park pays 33 per cent., and that Hurst Park £1 shares are worth £2 12s. 6d., etc., etc. And what about the inspired Press paragraphs which I have so frequently seen with my own eyes, and issued from Pratt and Co.'s own London office, relative to the "splendid going" and "high-class sport that will be provided"—and which have so frequently proved devoid of fact?

I have no other object in what I have written than the interests of the racing public, a large number of whom, I can assure Messrs. Pratt and Co., are behind me in my protest against their methods.

Mr. Gant, of 25, Conduit Street, London, W., issues a waistcoat-pocket book for 1907, which for beauty and neatness we do not remember to have seen equalled. The binding is in red leather; there is a patent fastener, among the most adroit of its kind; the leaves are gilt-edged, and a natty little pencil is cunningly lodged within the book. A calendar—episcopal, financial, and astronomical—and business register is packed into a small compass, useful things to know alone finding a place in it. There are pages for social records, and a complete diary for the year. A handsomer little diary could hardly be desired, sent free to all clients! Mr. Gant's business is perhaps the largest Turf accountancy concern in the world, and his premises are situated in the very heart of the West End of London—namely, 25, Conduit Street, W. He has been established for many years, and is himself a well-known member of Tattersall's Subscription Rooms, which is a testimonial that requires no further remarks. Mr. Gant was the originator of the no-limit system—that is to say, he was the first Turf accountant to pay his clients the full odds betted against a horse. Write.

CHARLES LEVY,
28, REGENT ST., S.W.
(Business as usual during the winter.)
Telegraphic Address: "Forejudge, London."
Telephones:
3615 Gerrard, 4190 Central.

Telegraphic Address: "Irishman, London."
Telephone: No. 5072 Gerrard.
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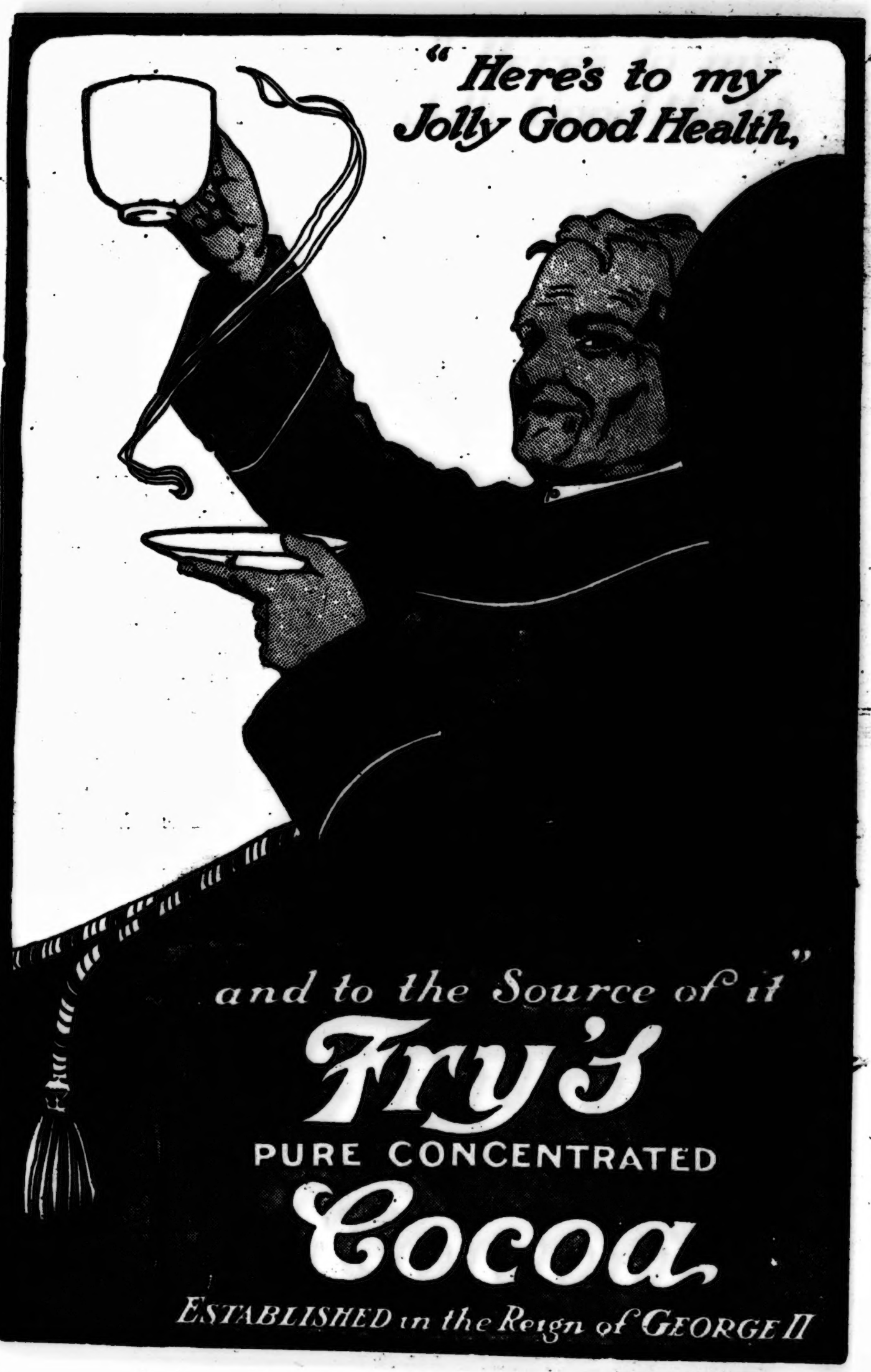

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